DAVVNINGS OF LIGHT:

Wherein the true intereſt of Reformation is opened in generall, and in particular, in this Kingdome, for the eſtabliſhment of weaker judgements:

AND

Many other things impartially Hinted, to a further Diſcovery of Truth and Light, in many or our preſent controverſies.

With ſome

Maximes of Reformation.

---

1 Cor. 13. 11. *For now we ſee through a glaſſe darkly, now I know in part.*

1 Cor. 13. 10. *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part, ſhall be done away.*

By JOHN SALTMARSH, Preacher of Gods Word, at *Braſted*, in the County of KENT.

London, Printed for, *R. W.* and are to be ſold by *G. Calvert*, at the black-ſpred-Eagle near *Pauls*. 1646.

110. k. 23.

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA ·
DOMINUS ILLUMINATIO MEA

To the Houourable,

The *Knights* and *Burgeſſes* for the County of *Yorkſhire*, in the Commons Houſe of Parliament, *viz.*

The Lord Generall Fairfax, *Sir* William Strickland, *Sir* Philip Stapleton, *Sir* Henry Cholmley, *Sir* William Alison, *Mr.* Henry Darly, *M.* Hoyle, *M.* Alured, *M.* Pelham, *&c.*

I *Should exceed an Epiſtle, to ſpeak of you in your ſeverall ſpheres of activity, for the advancement of the cauſe of God*; Some *of* yee have jeoparded your lives in the high places of the Field; Some *of* yee offered

your ſelves willingly among the people. *When the great* work *of God is finiſhed, the names of thoſe ſhall be ſought for that have acted for him, and it ſhall be ſaid,* What honour and dignity hath been done to *Mordecai* for this? *You that work both for* God *&* *your* Countrey, *ſhall bee recorded both in the* Chronicle *of* Heaven *&* Earth: *And* ye *are the more eminent in this, that ye have ſate out the* Apoſtacies, *and unfortunate* failings *of ſo many (preſerved through the power of Chriſt)* They went out from ye, becauſe they were not of yee: *And ſuch is the quality of your employment, that ye may learne to be at once both* Saints, *and* Stateſmen, *in this work: for the daily opening of the* ſecrets *of* affairs *before ye, both* religious

and

and civill, *may make your house a* Senate *and a* Temple; *and the more ſpiritually ye work in State-affairs, ye act in a higher capacity then common Stateſmen, or former Parliaments.*

My prayer is for ye, That ye may be ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.

So prayes your Servant,

John Saltmarſh.

To the Worthy and Eminent Committee in the County of *KENT.*

I Have through the providence of *God* been ſeated in the influence of your government, where I haye enjoyed, as others of that place have done, a *peace* and *ſecurity*, while many places of the kingdome hear the *alarms of War*, and put on *garments rolled in blood*. The Lord, *who is the mighty Counſellour*; hath poured out a *ſpirit* of *wiſdome* and *counſell* upon you, and ſo long as you act in the ſtrength of him, and in relation to him, you ſee you have ſalvation for Wals and Bulwarks.

You have much experience of God (as I have obſerved) in the conduct of your affairs, which hath not only been advantagious to the publick, and to the peace of your own Countrey; but *exemplary* to others *abroad*, and the more you go on to involve your ſelves into the cauſe of God, the greater ſhare you may look for in

in the *Honour*, and *Happineſſe*, and *Succeſſe* of it.

You know well (nor need I remind you) how the *intereſt* of your *County* is wrapped up in that *publick* and *Parliamentary aſſociation*, wch while you preſerve (through the bleſſing of God) as you do, in that *conſtitution*, you may expect to live by the ſame line of proſperity you have done. And ſo prayes,

Your Servant,

Iohn Saltmarſh,

To Mr. *Tho. Fuller*,

the Author of a Book entituled, *Truth maintained*: at *Oxford*, or elſewhere.

AS you accuſed me once of haſte in my Obſervations upon your Book, ſo you may now charge a delay upon me for the Anſwer I am preparing to your ſecond Treatiſe: my interruptions have bin many, yet the Truth I defend, I hope will overtake you at length, though you ſet forth long before me: I ſhall deale better with you, then you have done with me, to let you ſee our uſage on this ſide of *Oxford* hath more charity; for I ſhall fairly interpret the *good*, and *candidly* reject the *bad*:

bad: I could wish you would prevent me in comming over to our present *Reformation*, and so you may *satisfie* the *question* better. Yet, Sir, we might both do better to hearken to our learned Umpire, *Mr. Herle*, who tels us, *How needlesse further disputes were about Reformation, by how much Reformation is necessary.*

The Preparatory.

I Have in this ſhort diſcourſe laboured to give you rather the ſpirits *and* extractions *of things, then to write at large; and to point only to the* advancement *of* truth *amongſt us: for I ſaw ſo many plunged in the* controverſies *of our times, that it had been good* ſome *of them were either* well out, *or had never* come in; *for the diſputes which only before* warmed *us, have now ſet us all on* flame, *and we have reaſoned our judgements much beyond thoſe* boundaries *in the Word, of godly peace, and edification: Diſcourſes of this nature ought to be free and peaceably bold; for the* ſoule *is more at liberty for debating, where the leſſe*

leſſe ingagement or intereſt appears, elſe the enquiries can be but narrow and impartiall: I hope I need make no larger Apology for my plain dealing with all. I have writ little concluſive or poſitive: Determinations being not the proper work of us that ſtand below, who only aime at oyling the wheeles in this great work; And whileſt we are but on the way to Reformation, in peremptory concluſions, and finall inferences, there may be more haſte then good ſpeeed.

I thought, that openings and diſcoveries of this nature would help to a more ſolid and clear firmation in the truths received; for there is nothing brings greater unſettlement, then arguing things halfe way: and therefore our Reverend Aſſembly are not

to

not to be accuſed of any unneceſſary delay in things of ſo high conſideration.

I have writ in expreſsions not popular, for we ſhould not be too much the peoples, till the light we hold out were well quit of the vapours that darken it; not that I decline the multitude, ſave only in order of time, and there are certain cautions in the VVord for not revealing or communicating too ſuddenly.

Haſt thou faith? have it to thy ſelf before God, *Rom.* 14. 22.

Take heed leſt by any means this liberty of yours become a ſtumblingblock to them that are weak, 1 *Cor.* 8.

I have yet many things to ſay unto you, but you cannot bear them now, *Iohn* 16. 12.

And

And he communicated only privately, with ſome that were of reputation, *Acts.*

If I be thought by any to ſpeak too favourably of things ſo generally diſſented from: I deſire ſuch to take notice in what capacity I write; not as one that delivers poſitions to the world, but as one that would fain ſee what is the grounds or ſecret that the Prelates and ſome amongſt us are concentred in this, to call all other Hereticks *and* Schiſmaticks, *who may be found perhaps to differ but as the ſtronger and weaker Chriſtians, who though* one eat herbs, and another regard a day, do it *both to the* Lord.

Con-

CONSIDERATIONS in REFORMATION.

CONsider, that the Controverſies of our times amongſt ſome, take up the application of them ſo wholly, as a few particular truths are made their only buſineſſe, and the poſitive work of ſalvation little advanced; *Theſe ought we to have done, and not to leave the other undone.*

Conſider, that the *meaſure* of grace is not equal in all, nor the degrees of *light* the ſame; and this hath ever brought forth in the practice of the *godly*, according to the examples in Scriptures, an *indulgency* and *godly prudence* towards one

one another; and this would be a ſeaſonable conſideration in theſe times of *Reformation*, where all cannot bear the *truths revealed* to ſome; and in the *eſtabliſhment of Reformation* to come, where if all the *truths* be not ſetled that many deſire, yet ſo much may bee ſetled as ought rather to bee the object of godly indulgency & praiſe, then ſcandall and murmuring; and to bleſſe God for our very removes from Popery & Prelacy into the Reformation to come, yet ſo, as this be no caution againſt the peaceable teſtimony of thoſe, for the greater advancements in the worſhip or government of God, whom God ſhall ſtir up.

Conſider that the warres in the

the ſeverall States of Chriſtendome, as *Germany*, *Denmark*, *Italy*, *Ireland*, *England*, *&c.* are but pieces of the great work, and preparatories, and fall in their ſeverall degrees and orders into the deſigne of God for his Church, and the ruine of Antichriſt, and are not to be lookt upon as pieces and ſplinters that brake out from confuſed troubles: *therefore when you hear of wars and rumours of wars,* be not troubled, *for the end is not yet.*

Conſider, that unleſſe we be a people more ſanctified by the ſucceſſe and meanes wee have, our enemies ſhall not fall through any divine favour to us, but through the provocation of their own ſinnes, and then their ruine will ſcarcely be

be our ſalvation, but they ſhall only have the precedency to be firſt in the judgement: yet here we may look up at the prerogative of Gods mercy working ſometimes above ſins and provocations, *He went on frowardly in the way of his heart, I have ſeene his wayes and will heale him.* And there is to this too a ſupplement in the holineſſe of the Repreſentative of our *State*, or *Parliament*, though the body or people of the Kingdome be not ſo diſpoſed as we could wiſh; and this ſaved a Kingdome in *Ioſiahs* and *Ezekiahs* times, and may ſave ours.

Conſider, that our *dayes of Faſts, &c.* as they ought to be exceedingly advanced, we having experienced much by them,

them, ſo they may be poſſibly made to take up the *reall* and *ſubſtantiall Reformation* that ought to be, if our Miniſters looke more to their own deſigne, then Gods in them, and ſo the *dayes* and *duties* may almoſt devour the *power* of *godlineſſe* in the *practiſe*; for the *reformation* of a *day* is the eaſier duty, then that of a *whole life*, and ſooner done: and it would be well obſerved, whether we riſe up equally in this, that they bee not miſtaken, as it were, for the occaſional Antidotes of our weekly ſinning? and then if people once think an extraordinary day the only remedy provided, they will ſoone grow remiſſe in their conſtant practice. This I ſpeak that we keep not up a *ſtanding*

ſinne,

ſinne, with a *ſtanding remedy*: that it may be conſidered, that *God* loſe not any thing through mans *additionall* of *circumſtance* in *worſhip*, and becauſe I ſee the very *formality* of the *duty* is as much lookt upon by ſome as the *duty*, and the *duty*, as him to whom it refers, and carries almoſt the *glory* of our ſucceſſe from *Chriſt* himſelf, at leaſt is made by ſome indiſtinctly a competitor in our deliverances: theſe things would bee rightly and clearly ſtated to the people, *God* and *duties* muſt have their right places; and that may not only keep many *right*, but ſave ſome from going *wrong* in this point: let us be as much in theſe *extraordinaries* of *humiliation* as we can, ſo we hold up *God*

and

and *Christ* in their glorious *preheminencies* in them, and the people be taught to be as *constant* in the power of godlineſs, as *occaſionall*, & to know *Chriſt* for the only *power*, both of the *duty* and *deliverance*.

Conſider, whether our *provocations* under ſo many *Proteſtations* and *Covenants*, be not *equivalent* to that excellent duty of our firſt *Obligations*; and whether the *humiliation* for this, ought not to be as *ſolemne* as the *League* and *Covenant*, and as *Nationall*.

Conſider, that our debates and diſputes about *worſhip* and *government*, have not been aſſiſted with any publick or particular acknowledgement of former and preſent ſuperſtitious inclinations both in Miniſtery

niſtery and people, and with any publick or particular ſeeking God, for revealing his will in this preſent Reformation to us: this may make us ſo long in ſeeking.

Conſider, whether all of Prelacy be removed, as well as their vitiouſneſſe and ſuperſtitions, and that none of their pride, ſuperciliouſneſſe, and ſelf-ſeeking be left behinde in us, and any of our own Miniſters, eſpeeially any that ſtand above others in place of Reformation: and if ſo, let us endeavour the extirpation of it by vertue of our Covenant.

Dawnings

Dawnings of Light.

Wherein the true Intereſt of REFORMATION is opened.

The Intereſt ſtated.

BEing to treat of the *intereſt* of the *creature* only, I ſhall not ſpeak of the *intereſt* of the *Creator*, of *GOD* himſelf, which is ſo deeply and unſearchably laid in his own *Eſſence*, each perſon in the *Godhead* ſubſiſting in the ſame infinite *oneneſſe* or *being*, and ſo acting abroad adeſſentially, and intrinſecally upon the creature.

Rom. 11. 33. 1 Joh. 5. 7. Joh. 5. 26. Rev. 8. 22. Act. 17. 28. Jer. 23. 23, 34. Rom. 1. 20 Pſal. 8. 5. Pſ. 13 5. 6.

There is not any thing created, but it hath an *intereſt*, there is a *naturall* or *phyſicall* intereſt, that which conſiſts in ſuch a *being* or *cauſe*, or in ſeverall cauſes which are in conſociation, to the producing and improving ſuch and ſuch effects; and this intereſt is ſtrengthened and improved by the putting forth the effects and cauſations.

Judg. 16. 17. 1 Chron. 19. 2. Act. 12. 20. 2 Kings 18. 39.

2. There is a *political* or *civil* intereſt, and that is the ſtrength of every State: as *Sampſon* had his locks wherein his might lay, ſo there is no *Kingdome* or *State* but they have their locks, ſome *complication* where their power is twiſted and takes root, and like vines caſt out themſelves in ſeverall veins and ſinews of negotiation, and ſo acquire improvements.

But there is a *Supernaturall intereſt*, and that is it which I aim at in this place, or an *intereſt of Reformation*: this intereſt is conſiderable, either towards *God*, or towards *men*.

The intereſt towards God is *increated*, *divine*, more *immediate*, more *immanent*,

immanent, more *pure*, and *primary*.

The interest towards man is more *incorporated*, more *complicated*, more *circumstantiated*, more *secondary*.

These two parts, if well studied, might be exalted into a *transcendent science*, and it is pitty that now when severall *Ages of Reformation* draws on, few or none that I know, elder or more modern, that have much enquired into the mystery & sublimity, whereas every variety here below is drawn up into *systemes* and *aphorismes*, only this wanders incompleatly under the shadow of the science *Theologie*, which is so *universall*, that there is not that perfection attained in it, as there might be, if like other Sciences it were taken in, or inclosed, and so studied; for then some whose *spirituall ingeny* might be of a complexion fitter for such or such a part in Divinity, would apply thither, when as now they wander up and down in the unbounded *wastes* of Theologie, and like the Philosopher, who laying himself out to *nature at large*, sits down

with a narrow ſatisfaction; whereas the Aſtronomer, or any other *ſingle ſcienced* perſon, knows every ſtar and circle, and variation, and hath a more exact and particular knowledge, then ſuch an univerſall contemplation can give him.

The increated Intereſt:

FIrſt then for the *Intereſt of Reformation*, as it relates to *God*, I mean the *ſupernaturall* intereſt, or the *increated* intereſt: and we muſt know it lies radically in the *counſels of God*, and ſubſiſts in his *power* and *infinity*, and takes not degrees and improvements here below, as other intereſts *naturall* and *politicall* do: and therefore it is, that the *Intereſt of Reformation* rayes out in ſome ages gloriouſly at its very firſt riſe, & then when it ſeems to have the leaſt ingagement or complication below, but ſeemes rather to flow from *new created ſprings* and *originals*, ſo as that

that ſcripture holds forth, *Things which are ſeen, are not made of things which do appeare:* and though ſometimes other contraries may ſeem to have anticipated all the *intereſt*, and taken up the advantages beforehand, yet on a ſudden God lets out an effuſion of light, and ſpirit, and in a moment diſintereſſes and diſpoſſeſſes all the former, and this appeares in that, *when the people which ſate in darkneſſe ſaw great light, and to them which ſate in the region and ſhadow of darkneſſe, light is ſprung up:* for as the appearance of Chriſt to judgement, is implied to be momentary, *As the lightning that lightneth out of the one part of heaven, ſhineth unto the other part, ſo ſhall alſo the Son of man be in his day:* now the *Son of man* is thus in his *day of Reformation*, as well as *Condemnation*; and as in light there is not that graduall alteration, and propagation, and working for intereſt in the aire, but a tranſfuſion and illumination in ſuch an interminate ſubject or body, becauſe there is not in it any quality contrary, or obſtructive,

Heb. 11. 3
Pſal. 87. 7
Mat. 3 9
Luk. 17. 24.

ſtructive, that can put any impediment to ſo immateriall a thing as *light*: So it is in the *ſpirituall tranſfuſions* of grace and reformation, when the power and will of God carries it and applies it irreſiſtibly, efficaciouſly to ſuch and ſuch a ſeaſon or State, or people; for God being as it were more *immediate*, and *indiſtant*, and intrinſecal in this work, he will not ſometimes admit of any ſuch groſſe or inferiour artifice, and preparings, and conſociations, which argues an impotencie in the agent and work: but as he is *infinite*, and the *Creator*, ſo he commands the *creature* to make room, and the creature in an *obedientiall* and *paſſive* capacity opens and entertains his diſpenſations, this is then when he would make bare (as it were) his glory, and ſhew himſelf to his people, and put off the creature, and as it were deveſt himſelf of his intereſts here below, & act more immediately upon the world, and then his *light* and *diſpenſation* is carried on without reluctancy or diſputings in the crea-

ture, there is a melting at his presence, this divine work is sweetly insinuated in that Scripture, *his lightnings enlightned the world, the earth saw and trembled, the hills melted like waxe at the presence of the Lord:* the earth trembles, *the earth,* or the most *grosse* and *opace* impediment, the *hils,* or *high obstructions* flow down, and are powred out, when God powres out himselfe in any strong activity upon them. Psal. 97. 4, 5.

The work of Reformation being of this nature in part, and such an immediate efflux of God in Christ, we should rise into higher conceptions and contemplations concerning it, and find out the *interest* on which it turns, in the most spirituall motions and beginnings.

The more spirituall effluxes of the Interest, with a Caution.

AND these are the very same which God brought his *Dispensations* into the world by at first, and

carried on his truths on a *naked power*, witneſſe all his *miraculous actings* for his Law and Church then under *Moſes* & *Joſhua*, God carrying them on by a mighty hand, and after under ſeveral *Judges*, & by ſuch ſudden lightnings of mercy, when all their own *intereſt* was loſt & overflowed by the enemies, as the Scriptures intimate;

Jud. 3. 15. *Then the Lord raiſed them up a Deliverer.* The ſudden reſtoring of the worſhip under *Aſa*, *Jehoſhaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Joſiah*: And ſo the raiſing of the Temple under *Cyrus* and *Darius*, the expreſſions all hold out the *moſt high*, and *divine riſings*, and *actings*,

Ezra 1. 1. as thoſe concerning *Cyrus*, *The Lord ſtirred up the ſpirit of* Cyrus. *and then roſe up the fathers of* Benjamin, *and* Judah, *with all them whoſe ſpirit God had raiſed to go up:* and as theſe con-

Neh. 2. 18. cerning Artaxerxes, *And the King granted me* (*ſayes* Nehemiah) *according to the good hand of God upon me, and then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me:* And in

Eſth. 9. 1. the time of *Mordecai*, *And in that very day that the enemies of the Jews hoped*

hoped to have rule over them, it was turned to the contrary, and the Jews had rule over them. And thus the Reformation under the Gospel was carried on by a *pure heavenly work*, and immediate concurrence; *The Lord (saith the Scripture) working with them, and confirming the Word with signes following, and many of them which heard the Word beleeven, and the number of the men was about five thousand*, all on a sudden: Thus the *Interest of Reformation*, or the *Gospel*, lay then most in the *naked* and *immediate power of God*, subsisting in his very omnipotencie, and so in divers ages to this; though in a particular account from *Ecclesiasticall Story*, we may soon be led into some false experiments of this *interest*; for it was a luxuriancie in some of them, to put down some *miraculous passages*, or *stories*, which indeed are very questionable; for the *mysterie of iniquity* working higher every age then other, the *learning* of after times, partly in an *easie* and *corrupt piety*, and partly in a *policie* to Mark. 16. 20. Act. 4. 4.

preſerve the reputation of ſo divine an *intereſt*, kept up many Legends to this day: But for *later Centuries*, in *France*, and *Germanie*, *Scotland*, and our own kingdom, God hath brought in himſelf according to the former Scriptures, *with an high hand* with *ſignes* and *wonders*, with raiſing and ſtirring up the ſpirits of his people, working even immediately by himſelf; caſting out the intereſt of *Antichriſtianiſme* and *Prelacie*, and placeing *his owne* there, as at this day, we experience in the *late opening of heaven*, and *radiation* upon this Kingdom, when the *Prelacy* was at higheſt, and interweaving it ſelf *into Popery*, and faſtening its *intereſt* at the very foot of the *Chair* in *Rome*.

How the increated Intereſt works to be diſcerned below.

THis increated *intereſt* of the Goſpel lying thus in the counſels, wiſdom, and power of God, it comes abroad ſometimes on the *wheele of*

ſome

some omnipotency, when God hath a purpose to undo or dissolve the *gatherings*, and *strong holds*, the wisdom of the world, and to exalt himself to the eyes of his people and his enemies, *Wonderfull things did he in the land of Egypt in the field of Zoan*: And here we may rise into this enquiry, How *God* may be discerned in such a work? though best *by the Spirit, which searches the deep things of God.* 1 Cor. 2. 10.

First, God, in making any clear discovery of this *interest*, must assume such Agents as may not seem to stand in the way of his *omnipotency*, I mean, by casting any *shadow* upon it, but they must be such as he may be seen in, even to a *carnall* eye, as the *Magitians of Egypt*, who could then only discern God, & but his *finger* neither, in the *judgement of Lice*; of this nature were those things he made use on, as *Moses rod*, and *Aarons*, both blossoming with miracles alike, the *waters of Jordan, rams horns, lamps and pitchers, a sling and a pible stone, the jaw bone of an Asse, clay and spittle, handkerchiefs and shadows*, a Gideon Exo. 8. 19. Num. 17. Josh. 3. 15 16 17. Josh. 6. 20 Judg. 7. 2

1 Sam. 17. 50. Jud. 15.15 Joh. 9. 6, 7 Act. 19. 12 Act. 5 15. Judg. 6. 15 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28. Mat. 1. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 1. 26. 1 Cor. 1. 21.

deon, *or poorest family in* Manasseh, *and he the poorest in his fathers house*, and thus *the Gospel had its rise and increase*, God *chooseing the base things, the weak things, and foolish things, fishermen, and women*, and *laying* aside whatsoever might exalt it self, so as *not many wise men after the flesh, nor many mighty, nor many noble were called*: Nay, in the great and finall work for his Church, his very word, which he cals (in the name of the world) *the foolishnesse of preaching*, shall be acted by that *omnipotency*, as all the power of *Babylon* seems only to fall at the noise of that: I dispute not here, what other *concomitant* God may annex, yet the Word carries the reputation; and it is most reasonable, in this way of the Lords working, that *God* should overthrow them by that, which they in their own wisdome reputed but *foolishnes*.

The Intereſt ſuffers no change from the creature.

NOw this *intereſt* is only and entire in God, and the Deſigne works only below for compleating the body of Chriſt; and this body is made up of all *nations and kindreds*, and though in ſome nations where the *Goſpel* is, God may not equally diſpence ſucceſſe or advancement to it, but may often in his own wiſdom let the intereſt ſeem to dye out, as in our own Kingdom, and that of *Scotland*, he hath formerly done, and in that of *Ireland* of late; yet even then we muſt look at the deſigne of *Reformation*, as it is in *God*, and not in the *creature*, and not think ſo far below ſuch a glorious buſineſſe, as if the periſhing or waſting in any particular had put any ſtop to the work of God, as if any thing of the world had power to diſorder the *uniformity* of ſuch a work, and *ſhould put God about*, but we

we muſt know that God hath fully and from eternity made up the glory of this buſineſſe: and though there may be unevenneſſe on the worldly ſide of it, yet on the heavenly ſide of it there is none; as in former interruptions, not only when God dwelt in *curtains*, and in a *Temple made with hands*; but after, when he took up a more ſpirituall habitation in his people, for even then their *Churches were ſcattered abroad throughout the Regions of Judea, and Samaria, except the Apoſtles:* & here the *Spirit* hints to us, how God ſometimes locks up or layes up his *intereſt* in ſome remainder, as here in the *Apoſtles*, when the reſt were ſcattered, the *word it ſelf was hid in the root of* Jeſſe, and *the branch, the tree in the viſion had a ſtump left in the earth, and God had ſeven thouſand unknown to the Prophet, which had not bowed to* Baal, and *the woman which he lodged in the wilderneſſe, to whom he gave the wings of an Eagle.*

Acts 8.1.

Dan. 4.20

1 King. 19 18.

Iſa. 55.5. *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your wayes my wayes;*

God

God hath divers ends in making overtures of light, and withdrawing it, in Gods work there is nothing loſt nor in vain, and when the wiſdom of man is not able to make any thing of diſadvantages, the wiſdom of God can. Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, and to day, and for ever, nor in him is any variableneſſe or ſhadow of change.

I ſhall here for a further advancement to this, make a diſcovery of ſuch ſecret principles, as if clearly diſcuſſed, might prove of powerfull advantage, to ſome preſent and ſucceeding controverſies.

A right ſtating of the Churches Intereſt, of great concernment to ſome preſent Controverſies.

IF *the Churches Intereſt hath been alwayes below*, (I ſpeak now of the period from Chriſt) then this ſaves the birth of *a new Miniſtery*, or *Ordinances*, and all this may ſtand good:

good: *viz. Of receiving them out of mysticall Babylon, as the Jews did the golden vessels*, then it would be discussed whether any such way of arguing did strengthen that of a *necessary visibility*, and *whether it did as fully advance the Attributes of God: viz.* his omnipotencie, &c. and equally *comply with the revealed designe of God* in his word, of alwayes preserving a Church; and whether the *defection*, or *apostacie*, and the *slaying of the witnesses* could stand with such a Church-*interest*, and *how the temple of God*, on which Antichrist sits, *her golden cups or jewels*, may be in the Spirits sense the true *Church* or *Ordinances* in bondage, or only a *counterfeiting* or *resembling*; and *what the Tabernacle of God* coming down may imply, whether such a continued *interest* or no; *and whether the Scriptures themselves, being the Ark of Gods revealed will, be not the conservatory of the Interest in such intervals*, and *whether the Church or Scriptures* be the fitter Subjects, according to Gods method and rule of working,

1. 2. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

for

for preſerving and propagating ſuch an intereſt.

And if the Church hath alwayes had an *intereſt*, whether this *intereſt* hath been alwayes the ſame from the firſt, becauſe ſome do ſo quarrell that, and call it a going to *Moſes* from *Chriſt*, a ſeeking for *Goſpel to the Law*; and indeed, if ſome ſtronger labours were of this nature in full, not in broken Treatiſes, then as yet we have ſeen, they might heale many an objection about our *Miniſtery* and *Ordinances*, which for want of it, ſome may think lie too open: and here might be opened the ſeverall *adminiſtrations* God took up for ſuch ſeaſons, and how far ſuch *adminiſtrations* were intended to be anſwerable to each other, both before the *Law*, and under the *Law*, and how *the Law is fulfilled in the Goſpell*, and *whether there be not a fulfilling by way of eminency*; and if ſo, then *whether there be any ſuch ſpeciall or particular relating in the Ordinances under* Chriſt, Abraham, *and* Moſes; and this done, the ſubject and circumſtances of one *Ordinance* which

1.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

which fals under so peremptory a precept (I mean *Circumcision*) will sooner clear up to the weaker judgements.

And in this it would be observed what latitude such proof allows, whether *Papists* can take any of the same shadow to sit under for proving any thing of their *Hierarchy*, *Ceremonies*, and *musick*, to be a fulfilling of that part of the *Law*, *the Priesthood and Service*.

1. All these things deserve large and powerfull discourses, because from these such consequences spring up as may trouble our ages more then they yet have done, especially we being now laying our *corner stones*, and *beginning to build*: and this I should recommend to the pens of the most godly learned of our age, by way of speciall advancement to the cause of God at this present.

The

The contemplation of this Intereſt very ſtrengthening, and the higher, the more ſafe.

I Intend at this time but to let out a glimpſe of this *Intereſt of Reformation*, to awaken us into a cloſer purſuit and enquiry after it, for I know not any that have taken pains in this, except godly *Bucer*; and he hath not purſued this Intereſt under this *notion*, nor higher then into the next organicall part of it, concerning the *Kingdom of Chriſt* in its ſeverall *adminiſtrations*; and believe it, if this part were rightly and ſupreamly diſcuſſed, and held forth in ſuch *ages* as this, when God is caſting out *new beams* every day to the *world*, till at length all be *on a pure light*, and our *day* be like the *firſt day of the Creation*, when God ſaid, *Let there be light*, as if all the *ſtars* and *luminaries* of heaven were disbanded, and let out from their *Orbs*, *when the light of the Moon*

Moon shall be as the light of the Sun and the light of the Sun as the light of seven dayes: If this part, I say, of the the Reformation were methodically heightned and drawn into principles and Aphorismes, it would raise up the soules of Gods people in all seasons, and would be a subliming and strengthening to faith, even the very
Heb. 11. 1. *substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things that are not seen,* and such a spiritualizing to the soul, that we might live in the same region with the Apostle, *whose conversation* (as he sayes) *was in heaven*, in the same region with *Enoch*, who walked with God, and with all the *blessed Saints & Patriarchs*, who studied the science of this *interest* more then any; and therefore it is, that they stood firm & higher then all the lower regions of Providence, even in a serene firmament all the time of losses, and tempests, and miscarriages, &
Heb. 11. 27. declinings, *as seeing him who is invisible*, and *looking for a City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

But

But this is not the *interest* we look so much after in this age, men are carried by *lower* and more *natural* interests, which draw and entice the soule into the senses, and so *incarnates* the contemplations and graces of the soul, and when we should live a *life* even *hid with Christ in God*, we are *hiding* our life in the things below, *rising* and *falling*, *ebbing* and *flowing* with the ordinary Providences, not being able to attain to that *spirituall consistencie* of soule which the former agents in Reformation had; Nay, you shall see, that even the holy men of God, while they let themselves down into these outward Providences, they would often decline some degrees, as *David*, *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*: and as *Paul*, *Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading of the ship, but also of our lives*; but when he had conversed more above, and had seen a vision from God, he then could say, *Sirs, I now exhort you to be of good cheer, for there shall be no*

Col. 3.

1 Sam. 27.1.

Act. 27.10

Act. 27. 22, 23, 24.

losse

losse of any mans life among you, for this night there stood by me the Angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve. The reason that there are so many doubtings, and despondencies, and discouragements, is only this, Many look too much upon the *naturall interest of Reformation*, not upon the *supernaturall*, and that which is the more *hidden* and *secret*, which though it be *invisible*, and not so discernable to a carnall eye, yet it is the only *unchangeable, eternall & sure interest*, hid and involved in *God himself*, and in his *power* and *wisdome*; but the *soul* and *spirit* of man being in union and correspondence with something more *corporeall* then it self, the body inclines after *interests* that are corporeal too, as *outward power* and *forces*, and *successe*, and *excellencie of agents* and *instruments*, and *strength of contributions*, and *auxiliaries*, and whatsoever may conduce to the advancing and propagating the cause below; and if once they look about, and see not the *workings*, the *relations, advantages, contextures*, and *fulnesse*

neſſe of things below as they expect, and ſaw uſually before, they are preſently caſt down, and never on the wings of comfort, but when things have a ſtrong and naturall intereſt, and are on wing too; as the *weak Spouſe* could then only delight her ſelf abroad, when ſhe could ſee the *flowres appeare on the earth, and heare the ſinging of birds, and the voyce of the turtle, and ſee the figtree putting forth, and the vines with the tender grapes.* Theſe *puttings forth,* and *bloſſoms,* and *outward appearance,* and *viſibility* of things is the ſupport and only comfort of the *Spouſe*: thus ſhe was raiſed too, when ſhe ſaw but her lover *putting in his finger at the holes of the door.* So it is with the *Spouſe* now, with the Church and people of *God* now, they can only delight themſelves *abroad,* in the *Providences* of God, then, and to look about towards *Reformation*, then, when the *grapes* appear, and the *fig-tree* putteth forth, and the *ſinging of birds* is come, when there is any *chearfull budding and bloſſoming providence,* and any *muſick*

Cant. 2. 12, 13.

Can. 5. 4.

of

of ſucceſſe, and advancement: this was *Gideons* errour, an overlooking and neglecting the *ſpirituall* and *ſupernaturall* intereſt, and fixing his eyes too much on the naturall: *Oh my Lord,* ſayes he, *if God be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all the miracles our fathers told us on? But now the Lord hath forſaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites:* and yet we know, even then, the Divine and ſupernatural intereſt was working moſt ſtrongly for their deliverance from the *Midianites.*

Judg. 5.

But I ſhall ſet down, before I take off my pen, my Obſervations concerning the *naturall* and *politicall* intereſt which Reformation hath in this age of ours, even that *viſible* intereſt which is undeniable and apparant: but yet with this caution, that I do not lay theſe open, as affirming any unqueſtionable, neceſſary ſucceſſe, but as probable und deducible a ſucceſſe as ever age had, becauſe I know there may be withdrawings and retirings in God reſpectively to

a

a particular *State* and *Church*, and yet his Church have a fair and eminent intereſt both there, and elſwhere in other States and Kingdoms; for as a Nation is not dead in the funerals of a few perſons, nor an houſe ruined in the falling of a pillar or tyle, no more is the *Church*, which is a *catholike, inviſible, ſpirituall body*, by any particular declination in ſuch a *City*, or *State*, or *Nation*; though I muſt affirm this, That there is a moſt *clear, viſible, powerfull*, and *mighty intereſt* which *Reformation* hath in the *Chriſtian world*, and this *Kingdom* at this time, and if it ſucceed not here, I can accuſe no want of *ſupernaturall, naturall*, or *political* intereſt, for we are able enough in theſe, but I muſt accuſe ſome ſpeciall ſinnes that have done it, which have *ſeparated betwixt us and our God*, and *have withheld good things from us*, and made our God refuſe to ſhew us the pattern, and his will, for here are conditionals implied, *If the houſe of Iſrael ſhall be aſhamed of their iniquities, I will ſhew them the form of the houſe*: and again,

Iſa. 59. 2.

Ez. k.

Joh. 7. 17. *If any man will do his will*, he ſhall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or no.

At what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdome, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to deſtroy it,

If that Nation, againſt whom I have pronounced, turne from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

Jer. 18. 7, 8.

Severall ſecrets in the Intereſt.

I. *The Intereſt in Chriſt.*

THis Intereſt is laid up in Chriſt from all eternity, and here we may riſe into moſt ſpirituall apprehenſions concerning it, for though God cauſes the Intereſt to beam forth into the things below, yet it is in Chriſt like light in the body of the Sun; God doth ſo diſpence himſelf into Chriſt, that there is not any thing of God flowes beſide him, but all in him, and through him, *All things that*

that the Father hath are mine: for Christ, as he was the *Word*, was *with God in the beginning, and was God, without him was not any thing made that was made, in him was life*: in these expressions the Spirit lets us see how God made himselfe over to Christ: And further, *He was the image of the invisible God, he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and he is the head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, being also the brightnesse of his glory.* Joh. 16. 15 Joh. 1. 10. Ephes. 1. 15. 17, 18. Heb. 1. 3.

And the Scripture opens this mysterie further yet: *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself*, and *in him the fulnesse of the Godhead dwels bodily*: and when Christ that *eternal Word* came to apply the Interest neerer the creature, *He grew up before him, as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; yet the Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way before his Works of old, he was by him, as one brought up with him.* The holy Spirit holds out the mysterie of laying up the Interest in Christ yet more, and writes to the 2 Cor. 5. 19. Isa. 53. 2. Pro. 8. 22 30.

Church to comfort her in the *acknow-*
Col.2.2,3. *ledgement of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt, in whom are hid all the treaſures.*

But if we would ſee a further glimpſe of this Intereſt, ſweetly opened by Chriſt himſelfe, let us heighten our meditations npon theſe Scriptures, where Chriſt diſcourſes with his Father, implying the ſpirituall intereſt all the way.

Joh.17.10 *All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them, and as thou Father art in me & I in thee, that they alſo may be one in us, and*
21 *the glory which thou gaveſt me, I have*
23 *given them, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.*

So as now God being thus in Chriſt, and the Church adopted ſo near to that infinite Unity, of God in Chriſt, the Intereſt is unchangeably, and eternally preſerved; and to tie all faſt with the heavenly cordage of
Jer.31.33 Ezech.36. love, God holds out himſelf in a *covenant*, in an *everlaſting Covenant:*
26. Heb. 8. And thus it hath *pleaſed the Father,*
Col.1.19. *that in him ſhould all fulneſſe dwell,*

and

and all our Intereſt ſhould be treaſured in him, even to that of grace and glory, that our life ſhould be hid with Chriſt in God.

II. *The Spiritual Intereſt in Allegory.*

THat we may diſcern the Intereſt more nearly it is conveyed to us on the ſcene of Allegories, for God being inviſible in himſelf, and more immediate approaches, makes himſelf appeare through ſuch expreſſions as theſe.

Thou ſhalt hide them in the ſecret of thy preſence, thou ſhalt keep them ſecretly in a pavilion. Pſ. 31. 20.

I ſate down under his ſhadow with great delight. Cant. 2.

The Name of the Lord is a ſtrong tower, the righteous run into it and are ſafe, under the ſhadow of his wings will I make my refuge. Prov.

Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and ſhut thy doors about thee, hide thy ſelf as it were for a little moment: Iſa. 29. 20.

Walk about Sion, go round about her, tell the towers Pſal. 48. 12, 13.

Isa. 22. 23. *thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces. My beloved hath a vineyard, &c. he fenced it, and built a tower in the midst. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place. O my Dove, thou art in the clifts of the rocks in the secret places of the stairs.* Thus God hides his interest in these Allegories, *Clefts*, in *Rocks*, and *secret places* and *chambers*, and *wings*, and *shadowes*, and *bulwarks*, and *palaces*, and *towers*, and *fences*, and *pavilions*, and the *secrets* of his *presence*, for God is so indistant, and present with his, that they are safe in the midst of dangers, and he holds these *invisible Sanctuaries* over them: *Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not; he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.* Thus said *Job*, when his sight was dim with affliction, that he could not see into the Interest beyond the creature.

Cant. 2. 14

III. *The Recipients of the Spirituall Interests.*

THose things which are of neerest capacity to the receiving of the Interest,

Intereſt, are firſt the *Covenant*, or *eternall Paction* and ingagement, wherby *God* ſtands bound of his meer free grace to his Church or people, and by this interceding act he and his people are brought together.

The next is the *Scriptures of God*, or the *Word*, whereby the intereſt is propagated, being the *power of God unto ſalvation.*

The other is the *Church of God*, which is *the Fountain ſealed*, the *garden encloſed* wherein all the ſweets & fragrancies of grace breath forth.

IV. *The Recipients of the Intereſt.*

THe *Prophetical truths* in the Prophets, and the *Revelation of John*, are the ſeverall orbs and ſpheres the *Intereſt* works in, and hence follow the ſeverall degrees of *radiation* that the *truth of God* caſts out in the ages paſt, preſent, and to come. 1.

The *operations* & *fluxes* of the Spirit, of which there are, as the Apoſtle ſayes, *Diverſities of gifts, & diverſities of* 2.

ſtrations, inſpirations, illuminations, inſtincts, motions, created powers and *mights*, for effecting *ſucceſſes, preſervations, deliverances, advancements, &c.*

3. The purer Ordinances of Praying, Preaching, Propheſying, Worſhip and Government, holy Treatiſes, Writings, Diſcourſes, or any other Divine faculty, like a golden candleſtick conveying the heavenly light abroad.

V. *The Engines the Intereſt works by.*

THere are certain *created powers*, & qualifications *ſpiritual, natural,* and *civil*, which the infinite ſupreme Agent makes uſe on here below (as I hinted before) the *vertues, gifts* and *graces*, likewiſe the *policie, power* and *authority*, and *conſociations*, all theſe *God* takes up, & carries on his *intereſt* by them in States and Kingdoms, nor was there ever *Reformation*, but *God* ſet it on by ſuch wayes of application, either by *eminencie of gifts* and

and *inſpirations*, or by *eminencie of power*, and ſome of theſe he uſed more eminently at one time, then at another, as in *Joſiahs* and *Aſaes*, when the *coercive authority* was the greateſt wheel in the Reformation. 2 Chron. 15.13. 2 Kings, 23.21.

To conclude this, *God* improves Reformation by *created meanes* and *entities*, which are like wheeles and ſprings, and God moves by theſe, ſometimes in the way of his *ommpotencie*, ſometimes more *connaturally*, and according to his way of moving, the improvements are; if he move in a connaturall way, he works with the creature little further then its own capacity, and then things may go ſlowly on, becauſe he puts not out his hand to bring on the creature faſter then its own ſtrength will carry it: See this in *Ioſiahs*, *Aſa's*, *Ezra's* Reformation, in *Edward* the ſixth's, *Elizabeth's*, where the Reformation went on gradually from one obſtruction to another.

God having thus laid in *qualifications* of ſeverall orders for advancing his great work, they all work in their

proper ſubſerviency & ſubordination, for the whole creation ſerves but this glorious end, that God may have his Church compleated through ſo many ſeverall ages & providences, according as he hath drawn it out in kis eternall Model or Idea, which is, his own wiſdome or counſel; and when God is upon his work of Reformation, you may obſerve all the lower
Judg 5.20 intereſts are ſet a going, *The ſtars ſhal fight againſt Siſera in their courſe.*
Ezra 1. 1. thus ſhall the *natural intereſt* help on.
Neh. 2. 8. Ezra 7. *Cyrus*, and *Artaxerxes* ſhall ſend out commiſſions & letters to their Princes and miniſters of State; thus ſhall the *politick intereſt* help on. *Haggai Zechariah*, the people of God, ſhall pray and propheſie, ſo ſhall the more *ſpiritually-organicall means* help on.

VI. *The Obſtructions, and how removed.*

THe Spirituall obſtructions are *intrinſecall*, and *forain*, and *extrinſecall*; the intrinſecall are *maligo-*

nity

nity of nature, carnall reasonings, idolatrous, superstitious principles, principles of Atheisme, Libertinisme; there are but two wayes of removing these, by a Power spirituall, and a Power civil, or of Magistracie, and the disciplines and orbs where both these powers work, and influence; and here it would be well inquired how far this latter of *Magistracie* may be improved to remove the more spirituall obstructions, and to compell up to a Reformation, and how neer the *interests* of *Moses* and *Aaron* are, seeing they were at first in one subject or person, and after in two, but never to be found any more in one, as the Papists & Prelates would have incorporated them again: and its said, we clearly see not the right interest of Christian Magistracie by any practical truth in the Gospel, and that which makes it so dark is this, that no nations were wholly converted in Christ's and the Apostles times, by which we might have experiments of their *power* in cooperating with the Apostles, and what the true subservi-

ence

encie of ſuch a power is to a ſpiritual intereſt, and in what latitude, is not yet clear to ſome. And ſurely here we are too low of late in our Treatiſes, for we ſhould firſt ſtate the *intereſt* of *Magiſtracie*, as we find it in the Goſpel, and under the Law reſpectively, and then enquire into the ſecret of *Goſpel-propagation*, and why the the Goſpel begun below, and went up, and not as *Caſar* firſt, and ſo down? and whether it equally reſpect both adminiſtrations? and how far that Scripture that is not thought on in ſuch caſe may be conſulted? *You are not come unto the mountain that burned with fire, but ye are come unto mount Sion*? And it would be clearly ſtated, whether ſpirituall perſwaſion, and conviction, and the Evangelicall Ordinances, be the onely *mediums*, or *means*, which were then imployed for carrying on the Goſpel? and the auxiliary of *miracles* then annexed for compelling reputation? and now that of *miracles* ceaſing, whether *Magiſtracie* ought not to ſupply? Theſe are yet not beaten out ſo in our diſcourſes

Heb. 12. 8.

diſcourſes, as they might be.

The forain or extrinſecal obſtructions are, ſome Lawes, Cuſtomes, Traditions, Adverſaries or enemies to truth, Confederations with Princes and States abroad, a people of forain intereſts in their own nation. Theſe are removed by ſuſpending Statutes, opening Pulpits, Preſſes, and letting out the holy diſpenſation of the Goſpel freely, by State-agencie, and vigilancie, and a kind of ſending out *Huſhaies* to ſit at Councel table with *Achitophels*; and if this hath too much of *David* in it, yet the *Iewes* which dwell neer them may be treated with for intelligence, as *Nehemiah* did. Neh. 4 12

Inſtances of mixtures in Scriptures, as that of Corinth, thoſe ſeven of Aſia, the Parables improved, Mat 13.29,30. *of the Tares and Wheat.*

WHen theſe and ſuch like are urged in caſe of ſeparation, and

and mixt communicating in Ordinances; It would be further enquired, whether such a sense come up more directly or obliquely to the holy Spirit? and whether Church-corruptions, as *Corinth's*, and *Ephesus* &c. were intended any more for Proofs, or Arguments, or Rules, then Personal corruptions, as *Davids* lusts, and *Moses* passions, and *Peters* fears? and whether all such examples be not rather set down as cautions, and written for our admonition, that *we should not lust, as they also lusted*? & further, whether the name *Church* be not sometimes to be taken in the same sense under the Gospel, as the Ark and Temple was takrn under the Law still for the places of *Gods residence*, though sometimes he was not so visibly there? And whether the holy Spirit forbore not to *unchurch* them, because the fault was in some particular practices about Ordinances rather then in the *essential*, or *first form* of Church constitution, which they had perfecter then we? And whether this be a rule for the judgements

1 Cor. 6.11.

ments of Gods people, who are to go by the clear and visible Rules in Scripture, according to which Churches are made up, or have constitution? And whether the Holy Spirit would have reputed them still Churches, had they gone on in the toleration of such corruptions, for all their first constitution, as appears in that caution to Ephesus, *Repent, or I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick*? and whether the Parables of mixture of *Tares* and *Wheat*, and *good Fish* and *bad*, be so as may make for toleration of *visible mixtures* any where then in the world becaus they are *shut up* with the mention of the *Worlds dissolution*? And whether such *Church-censures* as Christ hath provided against sinnes and scandals, import not an *outward purity* in all such as would pretend to be members of his *visible body*? These things, becaus they are the hinges of certain debntes amongst us, would be more fully opened.

Sepa

Separation enquired after.

AND for *Separation*, I find it not rightly ſtated: for, withdrawings, and particular communicatings apart of the godly, that ſeparate only upon grounds, not ſo clearly or fully condemned in the Word, or commended, ought not to be preſently reputed Schiſme, or Separation, neither by thoſe that ſo withdraw, nor thoſe from whom the pretended ſeparation is made, if we would ſtudy the common peace of Chriſtians: and if this were rightly diſcuſſed, and the true Scripture principles made clear which bear it, there would be no ſuch *diviſion*, as there is *ſeparation* but it would be only a *ſuſpending* one from another, as in the intervals of uncleanneſſe under the law, till *Chriſt had revealed even this unto them.*

And indeed it would be well enquired, ſeeing God reveales his *truths* in ſeverall degrees in *nations*, and *perſons*,

ſons, Whether ſuch a national conformity be fully agreeable to ſuch a method of *Revelation*, and that all ought to conform *outwardly*, that conform not *inwardly*? and whether ſuch an *unity* may not have equally its inconveniences on the right hand, as *formality. hypocriſie, &c.* as well as the other on the left, *errors, diviſions*, &c. and yet all State inconveniencies muſt be taken in here, which may ſpring from the want of ſuch a conformity; alwayes provided that the rule in Scripture be fully conſulted, leſt we make Church buſineſſe bend further toward the maximes of State, then there is juſt grounds in the word: and it would be well weighed, whether ſuch ſeparation hath not foundation enough for more *ſpiritual correſpondencie*, then ſome on all ſides practiſe? and whether ſuch differences in thoſe that pretend all to come out of *Babylon*, ought to be eſteemed other than the ſeverall complections and features of ſo many members of the ſame body? ſome are more honourable then others. And here we might

might do well to obſerve better that great engine of Sathans, which he uſeth againſt the people of God, that of ſeverall *titles*, and notes of diſtinction, as of *Presbyterial*, *Independent*, *Browniſt*, *Anabaptiſt*: For by putting us thus under *Paul*, and *Apollos*, or *Cephas*, he drawes us into *ſcandal*, and *offence*, and *ſidings*, and *parties*, amounting almoſt to the diſintereſſing and unclaſping our ſelves one from another, and letting us out into theſe ſeverall channels, and then our ſtream muſt needs flow more weakly againſt the banks of the common enemy, and the power of hell and darkneſſe. I conclude thus, that theſe Scriptures would be further ſearched.

1 Cor. 1. 10. *Now I beſeech you &c. that you all ſpeak the ſame thing, &c. and that you*

Phil. 3. *be perfectly joyned together in the ſame ſame mind. Let us therefore as many*

15. *as be perfect, be thus minded, and if in*

16. *any thing you be otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveale even this unto you.*

Neverthelеſſe whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the ſame rule, let us minde the ſame things.

We

We then that are ſtrong ought to bear the infirmities of the weake, and not to pleaſe our ſelves. Rom. 15.

Let every one of us pleaſe his neighbour, for his good to edification. Rom. 15. 2

For one believeth that he may eat all things, another who is weak eateth herbs. Rom. 14. 2

Let not him that eateth, deſpiſe him that eateth not. 3.

In theſe Scriptures are almoſt the full latitude of Chriſtianity: in the firſt, the *perfect Rule of unity* is commended; in the other, the ſeverall degrees to this unity are opened, and commanded.

Chriſt's intereſts, and the Worlds.

ME thinks, in ſtating ſeverall controverſies of late, we go not high enough, but we ſtrive in the vallies, where the miſt is thickeſt, whereas we might ſee better and farther, if we could go up higher, to the intereſt of *Chriſt*: the *D*iſciples ſaw more

Luk. 9. more of him when he *took them up with him*, then they ſaw before.

This *intereſt* would be well cleared and held forth in its *glory* and *ſpirituality*, and abſtracted from all other worldly intereſts which complicate with it: the Kingdom of Chriſt and the World are two, in their fundamentals, policy, lawes, governours, ends, deſignes, and the more the World inſinuates any of its policy into the Kingdom of Chriſt, the more is the Kingdome of Chriſt darkned, and corrupted; and as it is in a civill State, the more of *arbitrarineſſe* that comes in, the more is the *eſtabliſhed government* ſubverted; ſo in *Chriſts*, whoſe government is more one and unchangeable, by how much a Kingdome in a ſpirituall notion, is more perfect, then a Kingdome in a temporall or worldly.

And if we obſerve well, we ſhall ſee that the great *myſterie of iniquity* is no more then a *meer ſpirituall arbitrary government.*

The Worldly intereſts works much in mixed *aggregations* and *counſels*, *autho-*

authoritative power, in ſervile dependencies and *ſubordinations*, in *promiſcuous unity and conformity*, and *univerſality*, in *blinde* and *implicite obedience*, in falſely pretended *antiquity*, as appears in the *popiſh* and *Prelaticall policy*.

The intereſt of Chriſt is in a *ſpirituall freedome* or *priviledging*, in *unction* or *knowledge*, in *conſociations*, in *homogeniall unity*, in *directive* and *ſuperintending*, in *perſwaſive*, and *reprehenſive adminiſtrations* or *ordinances*, and the government of Chriſt ſeems to be ſo framed, as neither Tyranny ſhould get in at any *conſociation*, nor Anachy or Libertiniſme get in at any *diſſociation*, or particular gathering, and at this beam we may weigh our controverſies of this age. Joh. 8. 36. Act 6. 5. 1 Cor. 7. 22, 23. Eph. 2. 19. 1 Joh. 2. 27.

And they that argue for any *complication of intereſts*, muſt look well to the ſpirituality of the Kingdom, and that God in this latter diſpenſation applies not ſo to the outward man, as he did in the former, and that ſimplicity, paucity, perſpicuity, humility, lenity, and viſible ſanctity, are the proper Jer. 31. 43. Acts 15. 2, 3. Acts 20. 17. 2 Tim. 3. 16. 2 Tim. 2. 25. Gal. 6. 1. Col. 3. 12.

proper orbs, where the *evangelicall light moves.*

And yet here I would be rightly underſtood, for I make but overtures for enquiry, while things are making to their conſtitution amongſt us, which if once conſtituted, all ought to be either actively or paſſively obedient.

The Diſputes for liberty improved.

THere are great diſputings now for *Libert*, and this ſprings from a mutuall jealouſie in each party, the one fearing the others eſtabliſhment will endure no other intereſt neer its own, and the more prevalent fearing the inſinuations & encroachments of a *tolerated intereſt* that is diverſe from it.

Now we ſhould enquire here, whether theſe jealouſies be the more proper paſſions of States, or Chriſtians, and how far Chriſt, who is protector of his Church, is to be truſted with the

the defence of his own government in such cases, and yet the true evangelicall latitude is not found out? Some plead upon such principles as would bring in an univeriall toleration, and while they would open a door only for themselves, they let in all promiscuously.

Therefore it would be enquired here if all must be tolerated, for fear of persecuting the truth through ignorance; then whether doth not this ground argue for a *plenary Liberty*, for all to propagate their interests equally with that, which is the commonly received *truth* of that place; for a *truth*, I conceive, may be no more *suppressed* ignoranaly, then it may be *persecuted* ignorantly: and it was as great a sin, if not greater, in that *Councel*, to charge the *Apostles they should not teach the people in his name*, as to *whip them for the doctrine they taught*. Acts 4.18

Again, it would be further enquired if such a *Liberty* be the *Gospel way*, what use of the reserves of martyrdome and persecution, which Christ

Chriſt hath made into ſuch a glorious condition, as if he intended it as a bleſſed ſupplement to that of *Liberty*, and it would be enquired whether ſuch a milky way as that of *Liberty* be always conſonant to the eſtate of the Church, being a *Lilly among Thorns*.

Can. 2. 2.

And it would be enquired too, whether ſuch a *Liberty* be fully Chriſts minde, becauſe the enemies of the truth, heathen Empires, and popiſh States as well as others are and have been abettors of it, and ſo it be rather a State principle tolerating only thoſe which either the neceſſity of ſome evill conſequence, or ſome *State expedients*, or the experienced innocency of the tolerated Religion hath produced: and yet on the other ſide, it would be enquired further, whether they that deſire this *Liberty* be not ſuch as are on the ſame fundamentals with us, and brethren in the Lord, and may be brought to meet with us in certain common principles,

Phil. 3. 16 *Walking by the ſame rule, minding the ſame thing in that whereunto we have attained*, and may not let out themſelves

ſelves unto mutuall peace and edifi-cation, their diſſentings, having a certain *orbe* or *ſphear* allowed them, wherein they may move, that ſtill upon occaſion, we may all fall into one *common ſociety* againſt the pub-lick *enemy* of the Goſpel, as *Abra-ham* and *Lot*, who though they lived other times at diſtance, yet were ever ready to relieve one another; and here I deſire to know whether ſuch ſeverall motions as this, which agree in the ſame *unity of faith*, of *mutuall edification*, and contribute together to the ſame publick preſervation; may not be with as little prejudice to the grand *ſpirituall ſphear*, as in the *naturall*, wherein we ſee nature a-bounding in ſeverall *motions* & *orbs*, and yet all theſe (as occaſion opens) mutually aſſiſting the intereſt of the *univerſe* or whole.

And here me thinks we ſhould ſtu-dy the latitudes of Chriſtianity more then we doe: eſpecially when the Scriptures holds it out to us, both in principles and practice: yet this cau-tion I muſt lay down, that all our

Gal.6.2. Phil.3.15. 16. differing Brethren be as carefull on their parts to ſtudy things that make for common peace, as they would have Authority carefull in acting againſt their particular peace.

There is much arguing now againſt compulſive authority, in caſe of Religion, and the arguments run thus: 1. That it is a note of *Perſecution*. 2. That it drives on the *Popiſh* and *Prelaticall deſigne* of *Vniformity*. 3. That it diſtracts and wounds tender *doubting conſciences*. 4. That it armes the enemies of the truth in their *tyranny*, from the *Magazine* of true *Profeſſors*. 5. That it aſſumes dominion over the conſciences. 6. That it intrudes into the place of God, and his Ordinances, which immediately influence on the ſoule. 7. That it was but judiciall and politicall to the *Jewes*. 8. That it runs an hazard of fighting againſt God. 9. That there is no *expreſſe command* nor *example* in the Goſpel for ſuch compulſion. 10. That it is a means of keeping out *truths* that are yet to be revealed. 11. That the authority

authority of the Magistrate in Scripture, reaches onely to *Moral* and *Civil* transgressions; and to *spirituall*, as they come forth into the outward man, and so trouble the civill peace or government of the State. 12. That it makes *Formalists*, and *Hypocrites*.

Yet here it would be enquired further, whether there be not the same morall and and judiciall equity, for the Magistrate to assist God in the designe of his Church now, as there was before. 2. Whether *Heresies* and *Schismes*, do not naturally bring forth such *divisions*, and *distractions*, as dash so on the power of the *civill Magistrate*, that they justly raise up that power against them. 3. Whether the *pleaders* for this compulsive power, do not over-argue it through indulgency, and the opposers argue it but half way, through jealousie; the one having it on their side at present, and the other against them: and whether a more moderate way be not the more *Scripture-path* viz. That the compulsive power may be

found in the Goſpel-principles, ſtated with ſuch *Cautions* and *Rules* from the word, as the *Enemies* and *oppoſers* of truth, may neither triumph in an unwarrantable liberty, nor the weaker Chriſtians have cauſe to complain of an unwarrantable authority, whoſe doubtings are experienced to wound their own ſoules, more then the ſoule of *States*, the *Government*.

Eſtabliſhment of Reformation.

IT hath not yet been far enough argued according to the principles in *Scripture*, of what nature the *eſtabliſhments* ought to be under the Goſpel, & ſure we ought more properly to adviſe with him that hath the *keys* of *David*, and knowes beſt how to *ſhut* and *open*, for elſe we may ſhut ſo faſt, that we may be forced to have our doores broken open from Heaven; as of late under *Prelacy* (we ſadly experience) who had ſhut up all with ſo ſure an eſtabliſhment, that

a truth could not get in but by violence; and thus *Rome* and thoſe Princes of *Bondage* under her, as the *Spaniard*, &c. make uſe of their *keyes* in all their dominions for ſhutting out, ſo as the *Goſpel-truths* have no viſible entrance but by force, unleſſe God bring them in at ſome other door yet unknown to us, as he ſeems to intend: now whether the eſtabliſhment ought to be ſuch under the Goſpel as may univerſally except all but what is received, or ſuch as may contrive ſome holy *prudentiall way*, for trying any *new revealed truths*; if ſuch be offered clearly from heaven by the hands of men, we finde that in Arts & Sciences the *Siſtemes* are not ſuch as will admit of no advancement: the profoundeſt agents in nature are led daily on to new *experiments*, and the *Ariſtotelian magiſtrality* hath been found no little hinderance to young travellers in the *regions* of *nature*.

Bacon *d*
Aug. ſcie

And that which may carry us on further in this enquiry, is the poſſibility of not ſeeing all at once,

ſtrenghened by experience in our *own* and *others reformations*; yet here we muſt enquire too, whether *Kingdomes* ought to ſit ſo looſe in their decrees, and whether the conſcience of *Nations* or *Parliaments* are to remain ſtill in ſuch a conſtant potentiality to new degrees, and whether ſuch a way would not keep a *Kingdome* alwayes tottering and uncertain? Yet further, whether the *potentiality* of acquiring *new degrees* of this nature, would not bring ſuch an alteration as were rather *perfective*, then *corruptive*, or *deſtructive*? and if ſo, whether theſe *jealouſies* may not be ſaved? we ſee, that in the bodies *naturall* and *ſpirituall*, there is a *potentiality* to any *perfective alteration*, as in the *aire* to *light*, and in the *ſoul* to degrees of *illumination*, till they come to the *ſtature of the fulneſſe of Chriſt*.

The

The advancers out of Babylon.

IN our commings out of *Babylon*, we have many *fellow travellers* that pretend as well to leave her behinde as we; and these are called *Hereticks*, *Schismaticks*, *Anabaptists*, *Separatists*. Now before wee be too far engaged in this, being they are such as pretend to come from the same *point of advancement*, or *setting forth*, it would be well enquired how *Popery* and *Prelacy* come to oppose them so directly, and *their interests* to be so inconsistent, if they be all enemies to the truth: I finde Christs maxime tend to another sense, *How can Sathan cast out Sathan?* yet here again, I finde that Sathan may appear as well an Angel of *Light* as *Darkenesse*, and *Heresies* may walk abroad, as well in *white* as in *black*; and that some *vices* are as inconsistent and destructive to one another, as *vices* and *vertues*. Mat. 12. 16.

However, they pretend with us to come out of Babylon, so it is possible they may only mistake their way in their going out: yet we must ask further in such cases, where *popery* & *Prelacy* agree with us thus *in uno tertio* (as appears in this one experiment of calling the others *Hereticks* and *Schismaticks*) whether a godly jealousie may not do well? for it is possible, to cast out the *courser part* of *popery* and *Prelacy*, and yet hold it by a *finer thred*, as it hath been to this *age* in our *partial Reformations*, when at first *popery* was cast out only by the head, and so gradually still holding it by some parts, for it is harder casting out a *mysterie* then every one conjectures at the first sight,
Rev. 17 5 for *popery* being a *mysterie* in the Spirits sense, hath something more then a *visible traine* of Hierarchy *courts* and *ceremonies*, there is something more *spiritual* in it, their mixed *unity*, their *tyrannie*, their *magistrality*, their *universality*, their *implicite obedience*, with others, &c.

Now it would be enquired what

interest

intereſt or *remainder* theſe may have left behinde, for it is poſſible for *poperie* to leave ſuch *roots* and *ſtumps* in the ground where it hath planted ſo deeply, & to work again upon theſe *hidden* and *occult diſpoſitions*, for the *Man of ſin roſe by ſuch intereſts* at firſt, and this the holy Spirit had obſerved betimes, ſaying, *the myſterie of iniquity doth already work, defections, compliancies*, and *apoſtaſies*, as we have ſeen, are eaſily obtained, when the *man of ſin* hath ſuch *inviſible intereſts* and *agents* layed in to work by; nor was the groſſer or more viſible *agents* the only meanes to actuate this Kingdom back againe towards *Rome* ſo often (as we experience) but theſe more *ſecret* and *mercuriall engines* which I have named. 1 Theſſ. 2. 7.

Firſt for their *unity*, it hath ſuch cold principles as freeze and congeale *multitudes heterogenially* together in the *worſhip of God*, and then puts the name of *Schiſme* upon all the *Reformed Churches* that will not come into the dark with them,

where all colours are like.

2. Their *tyrannie* reaches to the moſt *ſpiritual cruelty*, That of compelling ſoules under the *penaltie* of *martyrdome*.

3. Their *magiſtrality*, in obtruding the decrees of their counſels, their infallibility, with *Anathema's*, their *Lording* it over the *heritage*.

4. Their *univerſality*, in holding out their religion for *Catholick*, becauſe
R.v.17.17 the *ten horns have given their Kingdom to the Beaſt*, though no longer then *untill the words of God ſhall be*
5. *fulfilled*.

Their *implicite obedience*, wherein all *light* and *liberty* is denied to the people, but ſuch as ſtreams through their *miniſtery* & *diſpenſations*, which muſt needs be of their own colour, and will never be purer, comming ſo; Now theſe and ſuch like would be enquired into further; and our *miniſtery* may do well, a little more then they do, to ſet upon this part of diſcovery of the intereſts of *popery* and *prelacie* in their *magiſtrality*, *unitie*, and *implicite obedience* (as their

Cove

Covenant oblieges them) for this I take to be the more *ſpirituall part* of it, and little ſtudied, and thus they ſhall be more faithfull to their *Covenant*, which ingages them to a *univerſall extirpation*: and now that we are upon *reforming*, or *reſining*, the extractions muſt not be only of the groſſer, the *government*, *ſuperſtition*, *ceremonies*; but of the more eſſential, and formal, and vertual parts of *prelacie* and *popery* in the things I named; only we muſt take heed, that in ſuch extractions, the *purer ſpirits* doe not exhale with the other, and therefore in ſuch *ſpirituall experiments* the furnace muſt be chimically heated, for it is poſſible that *Gods unity*, *order*, and *ſubordination* may go out with the other, if the extractions be more violent, then the *word of God*, and *Apoſtolical practices* will endure.

The

The ſeverall Intereſts of REFORMATION in this Kingdome.

I.

The Supernaturall Intereſt.

THe ſupernaturall intereſt appears in thoſe many great and eminent mercies ſince the firſt opening of Heaven upon this Nation (I reckon now from our own late epoche of Reformation.)

And firſt in that deſigne of calling a *Parliament*, and engaging them againſt the Kingdome of *Scotland*, and ſo to have turned back the *Reformation* in its firſt advancing, a *deſigne* not unlike that of *Herods*, of killing

killing *Christ* in the cradle; and here *God* let in some glimpses, and cast in some jealousies into that great *Counsel*, which rescued it from such an ingagement, and for all the *State Artifice* of *Court Declarations*, and pretences; suspitions sprang up in the hearts of people, and though armies are levied by *prerogative*, and carried down, yet God takes off their *spirits* and *successe*, both in their *advancings* and *skirmishings* with *Scotland*, and this is made by *Providence*, a necessity of calling a *Parliament* again, so as this inter designe of the enemies, served onely to land us upon clearer discoveries.

This *Parliament* is summoned, and excellent Members elected by a corrupt commonalty, *So as the voice of the Lord is upon the waters.* Psal. 29. 3.

And now all things worke and turn upon *heavenly engines*, and the *long design* of *keeping* of *Parliaments*, is turned into a necessity of a *Triennial one*, and further, to that of an everlastiug one, by an act of continuation: *and God hath fastened it as*

a

availe in a ſure place, and how *Reformation* moves ſome degrees on.

Votes and ſuffrages begin to diſintereſſe *Properie* and *Prelacie*, *Gods voice is upon the waters again*, Petitions upon Petitions from *City* and *Countries* for *Reformation*, a mighty over-powring ſtill in the *voices* and *votes* for *Reformation*, both in the *houſe*, and elſewhere, Papiſts and popiſh caſt out of *Intereſt*, and place in the great Counſell, the Prerogative loſing many *State-advantages*, and the *Prelacy* many *Eccleſiaſtical*.

The contrary *deſignes* of *Jeſuites* and *Prelates* diſappointed, and all turned into deſignes for *Religion* and *Liberty*, and *Unity* with *Scotland*.

The *ſeverall plots* defeated and diſcovered, which were ſtill countermining.

That of bringing up the Army from the North at firſt.

That of bringing the *Cavaliers* to the doors of the Parliament.

That of betraying the *Militia of City* and Parliament, and ſurprizing all.

The

The ſeveral endeavours of betraying Cities, Towns Armies.

The corrupting Parliament Agents, and getting intereſts in their ſeverall counſels and forces.

The attempts of unclaſping us into ſeveral parties.

The reſtoring a *Parliament from the day of ſmall things*, in the generall defeatures, not long ſince.

The preſerving the moſt famous *City of London*, which hath been like *Ezekiels potters houſe*, the place where all the *Wheels* of Reformation moved.

And to all theſe, an *aſſembly* of many godly and eminent men for repairing the *Temple*, voting out Prelacy and Superſtition in the places where they ſate voting not long ſince to eſtabliſh it, with *Oathes* and *Lawes*.

The ſeverall ſucceſſe of Battels at *Keinton*, *Newbery*, *York*, *&c.*

The *Proteſtations* and *Covenants*, like heavenly cordage to faſten both Parliament and Kingdomes, and make them the more *ſtedfaſt and unmoveable*

moveable in the work of the Lord.

The many ſeverall preſervations and ſucceſſes of late, as that of *Newcaſtle.*

Thus the ſupernaturall intereſt hath wrought, and things have been as it were created and ſupported, by that naked *power, and wiſdome* of *God in Chriſt*, which carried on his *Church* with *ſignes* and *wonders*, in the times of its firſt riſing.

The ſpirituall Intereſt.

THe next intereſt I finde *Reformation* to have in this *Kingdome* is *ſpirituall.*

And firſt the many interrupted aſſayes formerly by godly Divines and others in the reign both *Qu. Elizabeth*, and King *James*, by Petition, Treatiſes, Dayes of *prayer* and *ſeeking God*, the ſeed time of which light we now enjoy, *light is ſown for the righteous.*

The many aſſemblings of private Chriſtians,

Chriſtians, in latter times, their *ſpirituall contributions* then of *prayer* and *humiliation.*

And now the means of grace powred out ſo effectually in *Preaching*, and *propheſying*, and prayer amongſt us.

The *effectual door* which is opened of late, and a ſeeking to *Sion* with our faces thitherward.

The return of the *baniſhed, perſecuted, godly.*

The daily ſeekings to heaven, in ſolemn humiliations.

The Goſpel lightning from *many Treatiſes, Diſcourſes, Expoſitions.*

The *ſending out labourers* into the harveſt, the ſpringing up of many young Prophets, as if this generation were the Seminary for the next: and to theſe *ſpirituall ſubſidiaries* in our own *Kingdome*, the *prayers*, and *holy contributions* of all other *Reformed Churches* of *Germany*, *Geneva*, *New-England*, the *Netherlands*, with the Churches in *France*, and *Scotland*, and *low Ireland*, theſe all fall in with us into the *ſpirituall deſigne*

ſigne of *Reformation*, we are engaged in.

This ſpirituall intereſt reaches to every *Ordinance* of God, to every *miniſtration*, to every *grace*, to every *ſpirituall faculty*, or power that makes towards Heaven or God, in *this Kingdome*, or other *reformed States*.

This Intereſt is yet ſtronger in the Prophetieall part of it, the *fifth Angel* now pouring out his violl on the *ſeat of the beaſt*: and here I dare follow Expoſitors to this, That *Babylon* is falling in the near parts of it; and for the time of the totall ruine, the Propheſie runs ſtrongly, and the Interpreters too, that is not much above ſix years.

Cant. 2. 17 To theſe, the meltings and diſſolvings of *cuſtomes, traditions, ſuperſtitions*, for the *day breaks and the ſhadowes fly away*.

The enemies filling up the *meaſure*, and *Ephah*, by their daily *ſinnes, idolatries*, and *provocations*.

The work of God upon *Sion* and *Jeruſalem*, or his people, in the preſent

ſent wars or tribulation.

The *standing ſpirituall remedy* of many godly Divines, in the conjuncture of an Aſſembly who like *Aaron* and *Hur*, hold up the hands of *Moſes*.

The Politick or Civil Intereſt.

THe power and acting of the *King* or *Supreme*, in a Kingdome *Monarchically* conſtituted, as this would ſoon give the *Reformation* a powerfull and ſpreading Intereſt, as we ſee in one *Cyrus*, and *Artaxerxes*, and *Conſtantine*, and an *Edward*, and *Elizabeth*; therefore Princes are called *nurſing Fathers*, and *nurſing Mothers*, to the Churches of Chriſt: yet though we want this *Intereſt* for the preſent, and the *perſonall actings* of a King, yet wee have in the meane time a ſupplement, a *Parliamentary regall power* of two Kingdomes: A ſtrong *fundamentall* in the work of *Reformation*, and a *power* very agreeable

able to the conſtitution of both, and very naturall, for the propagating Reformation in this Kingdom, and this improved by Aſſociations, and Covenants.

The preſent power, armies, and ſucceſſe in moſt of the parts in this Kingdome, but the Weſt; and yet ſome ſtrong Intereſts there to.

The conſideration with other *Proteſtant States* and *Churches*, (though I could wiſh it more) the commotions and troubles abroad, in *Denmark*, in States of *Italie*, *Germanie*, *Spain*, *France*, whoſe engagements gives them not time, to apply themſelves to our diſadvantages & diſtractions; God making them to hear a *rumour of war in their own land.*

Further Searchings.

I.

Non-communion, and Excommunication.

SEeing there is ſuch a difference amongſt us, concerning *Non-communion*, and *Excommunication*, that the

the first is not so proportionable, and adequate, and powerfull as the latter: now, that which may be considerable here, is, whether it appear an Ordinance or no, and then all such consequences are saved, and the objections are but imaginary; for if it be an Ordinance, and spititually strenghened and armed from Heaven: it is all one whether you call it *Non-communion*, or *Excommunion*: nor is it the weaknesse of any thing on the worldly side of it, that ought to make us prejudge it for no Ordinance, because there may be an heavenly and spirituall supplement to make up whatsoever may be suspected in it.

II.

Nationall and Congregationall.

That which makes the difference here, is, a disputing about the fittest subject for Church-ordinances, and we differ here in point of latitude and qualification; for on the one side, it is thought that a people

a people nationally are the fit recipients of all the Ordinances; on the other ſide, it is thought a people only congregationally are the fit recipients, and yet here is no ſuch difference; if we work higher, we ſhall ſee that ſuch qualifications are ſtated by both, and ſuch cautions, as the Ordinances are, but neither proſtituted by the one, nor the other, but a due regard had to the prediſpoſing, and preaccommodating to the Ordinances, which are of a pure and heavenly conſtitution.

Concerning the Model in Scriptures.

THat which makes the controverſie here, is the conſideration of Gods way of policy at the firſt with his Church, under the *Tabernacle* and *Temple*, which were all ſo exactly & compleatly ſent down from Heaven, with laws, and cautionary precepts, for the juſt obſervance, and

to

to theſe under the Goſpel the notions in Scripture, of Kingdom, City, Family, Officers, Offices, Church-cenſures, Adminiſtrations, Applications, with many things of ſpirituall policy, both in principles and practice, with neceſſary inference from Gods firſt method: On the other ſide, all this is acknowledged, yet in a little more latitude, and godly prudence is let in, for making up ſomething where there is not a deficiency ſuſpected: but no clear principles or rules revealed.

Pretended Hereſies, Diviſions.

AS we ſhould not go about to excuſe or defend any errour, clearly convicted, ſo not to condemn any thing for errour, which ſeems not to beare up equally to our received principles: and here wee muſt obſerve, that there are many, who when the notion of errour or hereſie is abroad, are only Pentioners to the multitude,

multitude, and measure the errour or heresie, by those that are for it or against it, and are resolved however to write that way that they see the most condemn; and these are such, who though they do not kindle, yet they blow the fire amongst us: and I have observed, that these do so overwrite a cause, that at length they improve an errour, and arme it more against the truth then it was before, by charging things on the wrong side of it, as we have seen of late: and thus while we think to gain, by letting in such a promiscuous stream of opposers, we rather lose: as in the case of some present controversies, who cõplain that they are rather oppressed then convinced, and born down, then writ down; & certainly, that wch makes us on all sides so far from peace, and issue, or successe: the more we dispute, is our intemperancy and unnaturall heats, in which we spend as much paper as in the cause it self: and I am sure in some differences I could name, the truth stands by, while we wrangle beside

beside it, and the dust that we raise in arguing, makes the truth lesse discernable; and that which is considerable amongst us here, is the exceeding prejudice received against *difference of judgement, and divisions*, not considering that it is Gods secret or engine for discovery, as well of truth as errour, and for advantaging the one, as well as disadvantaging the other. To instance in our late debates about *Government*, it will appear that truth is improved, and hath received advancement frō those very principles that seemed to oppose it; and I am sure in the case of the Antinomians, that errour about Free-grace hath drawn our Divines into more studying and preaching it then before, and stating it clearer; and the very Heresies almost of all times, have accidentally advanced some particular Scripture truth. And that very controversie about the Ministery received from Bishops, hath brought forth some advantage amongst many of the godly, even a deep humiliation, because it came to us with a mark

of the beast with it: and let not any jealousie or fear of derogation or disparagement, cause us to fold it up without any Nationall contrition or acknowledgement, now in a season when we are laying new spirituall fundamentals, as in that late *Act for Ordination*: let the Prelates own designes of connivence, whose principles dare not look the Light in the face.

Selfe indulgency: with the right use of Heresies and Errours.

FIrst, it is impossible but *Heresies* and *Errours* should be, though there be a *woe* upon the Authors and Abettors, so as one would think this prediction of Christ should coole us in the heat of our tumults about them, and we should make no wonder at that which Christ hath prepared us so long before hand to receive; yet here we should do as the *Disciples* did, when their Lord had foretold

told them of a treachery to befall him, every one said, *Master is it I?* this reflective disposition, or selfe-jealousie I finde much wanting in many, while every one rather sits armed at his own door, and will neither search his house himself, nor suffer another to go in without opposition: and thus all count their opinions truth and will not do so much as suspect their own judgements, which was not the *Disciples* practice; and so we are forced to confute one another, while no man will confute himself, and thus differences are inflamed.

And be it, that the things we condemn for *Heresies* and *Errours*, be so, then there is this left us, to work up to Gods designe in such cases, and to turn them into advantages for the truth, and such a work is next to Gods, who takes in every sinne and distemper, and makes it act something to his glorious ends, *He hath commanded light to shine out of darknesse.*

Are they Anabaptists, as they call them? Let it provoke us to awaken

the Scriptures more for what we do; let us ſtudy the ſubſtance of the Covenant more, let us ſtudy Scripture inference and deductions more, let us ſtudy the correſpodency of the Seals under both diſpenſations more, and we ſhall gain this, to be able to do, what we do, upon clearer and ſtronger principles.

Are they Browniſts or Separatiſts as they call them? Let it ſtir us up to look to our Fundamentall truths better, to our Miniſtery, to our Churches, to our Practices: and ſure while theſe controverſies involve us more into the Scriptures, we ſhall only come forth more refined and clearer in judgement and practice; and what we might poſſibly have taken in under the notion of Tradition or Authority, and ſo have engaged our ſelves implicitely to the truths we profeſſe, we ſhall now give up unto God *a more reaſonable ſacrifice.*

Are they Antinomians, as ſome cal them? or theſe that cry down Law, or duties? Let us draw this advantage,

vantage, to ſeek out how the riches of Free grace are offered, and how the Law is eſtabliſhed by the Goſpel, and what power of it is annulled, & how Chriſt is to be advanced above all, and how he is all in all, and the true Fountain in whom our life is hid; and that our being in him, and he in us, is the cauſe of all graces and duties in us: and that our life now in grace ought to be in conformity to that we ſhall live hereafter in glory, where being filled with Chriſt, we ſhall only live to the obedience and praiſe of him, for that work of juſtification and redemption we had by him: and let us ſtudy to give duties their right origination, order and end, Prayer, Repentance, Obedience, &c. as grces that flow from Chriſt into his, and back again from his into Chriſt; and that we interpret all Scriptures that concern either Chriſt, or the Law, or Sin, or Obedience, or Duty, into the glory of God in Chriſt, that all our concluſions may exalt him, whom God had in deſigne only to exalt, *To be a Prince and a Saviour.*

And thus we ſhould drive on Gods ends more then we doe, in making every thing ſerve his glory, and our own edification, and not daſh our ſelves meerly one againſt another, and go out only in vapours of heat and oppoſition, which too many do.

Trials of God amongſt us.

THat which is an argument of trouble, and diſtraction to carnall judgements, ought to be the only confirmation and ſtrengthening to Gods people, who live in a higher region, and ſtand on the vantage ground above the men of the world, and ſee how the deſignes of Heaven are managed, and are able to diſcern that in the creature, which others are not, even a providence work which ſhines forth in the contexture of things and affairs, like the Sun beams on the wall and firſt let it be no wonder that God is in the midſt of troubles and tumults. *I will*

ſhake

ſhake all Nations, ſayes God, and then it follows, *the deſire of all Nations (or Chriſt) ſhall come before me*; and when he was with *Iſrael* he was in a *cloud* and *fire* at one time, in *lightning* and *thunder* at another; and when with his Prophet, *there went a whirlewinde and fire before him*, and the Spirit of God which knowes Gods manner of preſence beſt, ſets him forth thus, *Our God ſhall come, a fire ſhall devoure him, and it ſhall be very tempeſtuous round about him*: when he was with *Gideon* and his people, it was ſo, as he could ſee little of him, *If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?* when, *with his people in captivity*, it was ſo as the Prophet could ſay, *Can theſe dry bones live?* When with his Diſciples, it was ſo, as *there was no comelineſſe in him, he was not deſirable*: when with his Apoſtles, he ſtrook the *room with a whirlewinde*, and *enlightned it with fire*.

Hag. 2 7. Exo. 19 9. 1 Kin 19. 12. Pſal. 50. 3. Judg. 6. 1 Eze. 37. 3 Iſay 53.

See Gods method and goings before amongſt his people, and you ſhall trace him now in the ſame ſpiri-

tuall and providentiall impreſſions.

Firſt, in our *Parliamentary & Divine Aſſembly*, and the riſing of people to *build the Temple of God*; ſo it was before, when the Temple in type was raiſed, *and the Lord ſtirred up the ſpirit of Zerubbabel the ſonne of Shelathiel, Governour of Judah, and the ſpirit of Joſhua the ſon of Joſedech the high Prieſt, and the ſpirit of all the remnant of the people, and they came, and did work in the houſe of the Lord.* Hag. 1.

In the beginnings of the war, when a few Delinquents drew in ſo great a party to the Kings party, & when ſo many revolted from the work; ſo it was before in that of *Gibeah*, which got in the Tribe of *Benjamin* to their quarrell againſt all *Iſrael*. And in that of *Abijah* and *Jeroboam*, when *Jeroboam* was *four hundred thouſand men more then Judah: but there were gathered to them vain men, the children of Belial, who thought to withſtand the kingdom of the Lord, with whom was a great multitude, and golden Calves, who caſt out the Prieſts of the Lord*. 2 Chron. But with

with Abijah was the Lord God, and the Prieſts which miniſter unto the Lord, and they which burn ſacrifice morning and evening, and which ſounded trumpits to cry alarm againſt yᵉ, O children of Iſrael.

In the Contributions brought into the work of the Lord, as the Plate, Money, Jewels, Levies, Loanes. So it was before, when ſome of the chiefe of the Fathers gave unto the work, and the reſt of the people, twenty thouſand drams of gold and ſilver. Neh. 7.

In the divers ſucceſſe the enemies had in the proceding of this War: So it was before when the *Sons of Belial in Gibeah* involved a whole Tribe into their quarrel, and got the better of it in divers battels. Judg. 20.

In the battels and victories we had in many places, as *Edge-hill* & *York*, where our multitude did not deliver us. So it was before in *Gideons*, when God took off his Army to three hundred, and then gave him the ſucceſſe againſt his enemies.

In other particular deliverances of

beſieged places, as *Bradford*, *Hul*, *Lime*, *Gloceſter*. So it was in *Ziph*, in *Keilah*, in *Jeruſalem*, when God
1 S. m. 23. cauſed *Saul* and *Senacherib* to hear a rumour of war to divert them from
Iſa 36. the ſiege.

In our diviſions about ſome ſcripture truths, in our murmurings and diſputings, and our wayes of conciliation by an Aſſembly. So it was before amongſt the Brethren, till a Councell at *Jeruſalem* reconciled them: So amongſt the *Grecians* and the *Hebrewes*, till the Brethren were called together to conſider of it.

In the diſcoveries of Conſpiracies and Plots againſt Parliament, and City, and Armies. So it was with *Iſrael*, when *Eliſha* diſcovered the councels of the *Syrians*: So with *Nehemiah*, when *Sanballats* and *Tobiahs* plots were revealed: So with the *Iewes*, when *Hamans* was diſcovered and defeated: So with *Abſolons*, when *Achitophels* was turned into folly. *The Lord is known by the judgements that hee executes: the wicked is ſnared in the works of their own hands.*

In

In ſtirring up the younger ſort into attempts againſt the Armies and enemies of God. So it was before, when *Ahab* ſaid, *By whom? And he ſaid, Even by the young men of the Princes of the Provinces.* 1 Kings 20.34.

In raiſing up new Armies after diſcomfitures and loſſes; as in the generall rout we had throughout the Kingdome not long ſince, when our Southern, Weſtern, and Northern Armies were ſcattered. So it was before when *Iſrael* had loſſe after loſſe in their way to *Canaan*, and ſtill recruited by the power of their God.

In carrying on the cauſe through windings & turnings through loſſes and victories, making us a mutuall ſcourge to one another, daſhing us both in pieces, and repairing us again: and thus keeping up a ſtanding affliction amongſt us, till his work be finiſhed on Mount Sion, & his judgement on his enemies. So it was before, when *Iſrael* and *Iudah* were engaged againſt each other: So it was with *Ionahs* ſhip, when they rowed hard to ſhore, but they could not

not, *for the winde blew and was tempestuous against them.*

God standing in these times.

THey that would see God in this work, must consider the *spiritualnesse* of the *designe*, and Gods way of *mysterious acting*, and not let themselves down into the creature, and think that the breaking of an Army, or a Party, breaks Gods designe; for it remains the same *yesterday* and *to day*, and *the same for ever*; and God takes in miscarriages, disadvantages, and improbabilities, and seeming impossibilities, and treacheries, and enemies workings, and makes them all work into his purpose: He took in a treacherie at the compleating of the spirituall designe of our redemption, and a *Iudas* must accidentally, though wofully, help in the work of our salvation. So that if we would but study Gods designe concerning his Church and method, and rise up higher

higher then the creature & the creatures method in our conceptions, and look on the other ſide of it, we ſhould not be at ſuch loſſes and ſtands, and in ſuch deſpondencies and diſcouragements as we are: And while we graſp at the creature too faſt, either at Agents, or Armies, or Counſels, God many times (as we experience) drawes them either off from us, or us from them.

Again, we muſt look at *Gods ſtanding* amongſt us: He is not now as he appeared to *Iſrael* on the Mountain, *with a clear paved work of a Saphire under his feet*; but he is now as he was before in the viſions, he ſtands *in the bottome among the Mirtle trees, on a red horſe*, ſo ſhaded as none but his own can ſee him; *His ſpirit* is in the *wheeles*, and *one wheele* within another: He walks in the midſt of the ſeven golden Candleſticks, yet none but a Diſciple ſees him. The work of Church providence is intricate and perplexed; ſo it was when the *Iewes* were his people, and now it is when the *Gentiles* are his people

ple too: ſo it was in the *firſt part* of his *work* about his *Church*, and ſo it is in this *ſecond part* of his *work* too; for it is all but *one Work*, only in ſeverall complexions and methods, to *Iſrael* and the *Gentiles*.

Maximes of REFORMATION.

God's engagement for deliverance.

WHen the people of God are under any ſpirituall or civill oppreſſion, God will be ſure to be mindefull of them, deſigning ſome courſe for their deliverance, not in the way of his common providence, but frō the engagement that he hath laid upon himſelf by covenant: And in this his ſeaſon of thoughts towards them, their ſighes and complainings of ſoul do move him and put him on, and actuate his wiſdome into experiments. *And the children of Iſrael ſighed by reaſon of bondage, & they cried, & their cry came up unto*

Exod. 2. 23, 24, 25.

to God and God heard their groaning, and remembred his covenant, and had respect unto them

Eminent workings.

When God sets himself to deliver a people, he comes towards some of them in some eminent working, and engages them to go before the people.

Come therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou maist bring forth my people. Exod. 3. 1

Dispositions beforehand.

When God intends actually to enlarge a people, he layes in dispositions beforehand into the hearts of the Princes and Elders, so that all their motions shall fall easily into such conjunctures as tend that way.

And they shall hearken unto thy voice, and thou shalt come, thou and the Elders of Israel. Exo. 3.

Gods designe upon obstructions.

When the Lord is upon the work of enlargement and bringing out his people, he often allowes the obstructions which their enemies cast in, and

and yet goes on to make up his glorious deſigne of their impediments.

Exo.3.19. *And I am ſure the King of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.*

Mutuall concurrences.

The Lord in the great deſigne of leading forth his people, acts both the Elders and Miniſters into mutuall concurrences and ſtrengthnings of each other, that the failing of each may be made up by the others ſupply.

Exo.4.16. *And Aaron ſhall be thy ſpokeſman unto the people, and he ſhall be to thee in ſtead of a mouth, and thou ſhalt be to him in ſtead of God.*

Some experiments eccentrick to Gods time.

There are oftentimes certain experiments which the people of God make in their way to deliverances before the fulneſſe of time come: But ſtill there is ſuch a want of correſpondency in the things they look for, that they make no proceeding, but faile, being eccentrick to Gods time of ſucceſſe. *He*

He ſuppoſed his brethren would have underſtood how that God by his hand would deliver them, but they underſtood not. Acts 7.25

Succeſſe through diſadvantages.

When God ſtirs up a people to go out from bondage, he gives the enemy the liberty of obſtructing and raging, and drawes forth his people through many windings and turnings; ſo as their paſſage is not even and direct, but their ſucceſſe is made up of diſadvantages, of contrarieties, and improbabilities.

He brought them out, after that he had ſhewed ſignes and wonders in the land of Egypt. Act. 7.36.

The ſeaſon of ſeeking God.

When tidings of publick calamity are abroad, then is the ſeaſon of ſeeking God, and enquiring after ſin, and putting God in minde of covenants and engagements that hee ſtands in to his people.

And they ſaid unto me, the remnant that are left of the captivity there in the Province, are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Hieruſalem alſo Neh. 1.3 4,5.8,10.

also is broken down: and it came to passe when I heard these things, that I sate down and wept, and prayed, and I said, I beseech thee O Lord remember now these are thy servants whom thou hast redeemed.

Relations for advantaging the cause of God.

We must observe all our relations in publick times, and see how we are placed for advantaging the cause of God, and we must put forward every engagement, still keeping an eye upon him for directing our designes to his own ends.

Neh. 1. 11 *Prosper I pray thee thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man: for I was the Kings Cupbearer.*

When to impart the appearances of God.

That which will exceedingly excite the spirits of people to publick endeavours, is a wise imparting the severall preparations that God hath made, and the appearances of God to the rises and beginnings that are attempted; for men are the easilyer drawn

drawn to engage there, where they see God ingaging first.

Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me, as also the Kings Words that he had spoken unto me, and they sayed, let us rise up and build: so they strengthened their hands for this good work. Neh. 2. 18

Treating with few, and a just survey.

In the first designing of Reformation, it is good treating only with few at first, and that in secret, and to take as just a survey of the necessity as you can.

And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me, neither told I any man what God had put in my heart, to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon. Neh. 2. 12

Let your enemies see your interest.

When the enemies of God are beginning to plot against the endeavours of Reformation, the safest is to let them see the interest you rest on, and that your judgement and resolu-

reſolution is ſeated higher then to bee eaſily taken downe with contempts, or ſcandals, or practices.

Neh. 2. 19 20. *But when* Sanballat *the Horonite, and* Tobiah *the ſervant the Ammonite, and* Geſhem *the Arabian heard it, they laughed us to ſcorn, and deſpiſed us, and ſaid, what is this thing that you do, will you rebell againſt the King? Then anſwered I them, and ſaid unto them, the God of Heaven he will proſper us; therefore we his ſervants will ariſe and build: but you have no portion, nor right, nor memoriall in* Jeruſalem.

Holy preparations, foundations, for Reformation.

In the work of Reformation, your beginnings and foundations, muſt be layed in prayer and holy preparations, the works of God muſt be advanced in the wayes of God, and Reformation muſt go up in ſanctification.

Neh. 3. 1. *Then* Eliaſhib *the High Prieſt roſe up with his Brethren, the Prieſts, and they built the ſheepgate, they ſanctified it, and ſet up the doors of it even*

unto

unto the tower of Meah, they ſanctified it unto the tower of Hananell.

Watching with both eyes.

In the practices of the enemy, we muſt watch with both eyes, one towards Heaven, & the other towards the work we have to doe; though God is able to fortifie the weakeſt proceedings, and ſhade them from violence: yet we muſt not ſo tempt God for extraordinaries, as we take not the ordinaries he provides us.

Nevertheleſſe we made our prayer unto our God, and ſet a watch againſt them day and night becauſe of them. Neh. 4. 9.

The time of the ſtrongeſt conſpiracies.

The times of the enemies ſtrongeſt & moſt effectual conſpiracies, is then, when the work of Reformation appears in ſome ſucceſſe and preparation.

But it came to paſſe, that when Sanballat and Tobiah, *and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Aſhdodites, heard that the wals of* Jeruſalem *were made up, and that the* Neh. 4. 7.

the breaches began to be ſtopped, then they were very wroth.

When Reformation is violent.

When a people are ſuperſtitiouſly principled, and Nationally converted, reformation is but violent, and formall, and they turn only by a power from without, and not within.

2 Cro. 34.

Jer. 3. 10. *And yet for all this, her treacherous ſiſter Iudah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but fainedly, ſaith the Lord.*

How people coole.

When the people are all on a flame in Reformation, they coole as ſoon upon intermiſſions, and obſtructions, for ſuch heats are but moods and paſſions. *O Ephraim what ſhall I do unto thee? O Iudah what ſhall I do unto thee? For your goodneſſe is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.* As in the time of *Elijah*, when they killed *Baals* Prieſts one day, and would have killed *Elijah* the next.

Hoſ. 6. 4.

Diſpenſations of right principles.

That a Reformation which is laſting

ing, muſt bee ſure to abound with diſpenſation of right principles, and there muſt ſuch courſes be projected, as the light may be diſperſed amongſt the people, and intereſts muſt be ſought for, by laying in good principles to work out the bad. 2 Cro. 17. 8. 9.

And with them he ſent Levites, and they taught in Iudah, &c.

Carnall reaſonings in Reformation.

Take heed of carnall reaſonings in Reformation, they will ſooneſt weaken the hands, for there is ſcarce any Reformation but it will hold out ſome parts which may offend the darker ſide of judgements or opinions, there was ſo much in *Ezekiahs* as might have ſtumbled ſome, becauſe the very Serpent which *Moſes* ſet up was broken down; and ſo much in *Chriſts*, becauſe he put down *Moſes* and the Law, which God himſelf had given, though he did but indeed fulfill it, and ſo much in the Apoſtles, becauſe they were men without learning, which turned back the Phariſees and Rulers that they could not

not believe in him; and ſo much in ours now, becauſe old cuſtomes, and old laws, and old traditions are broken down.

The deſigne of Fixation.

In times of Reformation, there muſt be an eminent deſigne amongſt many others, and that is the deſigne of fixation, which muſt be advanced by all ſpirituall and civill meanes: This Kingdome hath moſt need of that, for they have ſtill changed Religion with the change of ſucceſſors: and yet this deſigne of fixation muſt be ſo cautionary and proviſionall, as may let them out to higher degrees of Reformation, this was *Iſraels* and *Iudahs* caſe, a *recovering* and *backſliding* with the ſucceſſion of good and bad Princes? *Oh Iudah what ſhall I do unto thee? for your goodneſſe is as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.* Hoſ 6.4.

Reformation times.

Reformation times prove often very hard and expenſive times, and times of murmuring; yet that ſhould not make for diſcouragement, but redreſſe. *And*

And there was a great cry of the people: some there were that said, We have morgaged our lands: some also that said, We have borrowed money. Then I consulted with my self. Neh. 5. 1,3,4,7.

In publick engagements particular interests must be laid by, and the yoke of oppressions taken off, and the cause of God must take up all: they that build their own houses and the Temple together, are no fit workmen for a spirituall fabrick.

I rebuked the Nobles and Elders, and said unto them, You exact usury, restore I pray you, unto them their lands and their vineyards. Neh. 5. 7. 8.

A sad Preferment.

They that are called out to the publick, ought to let all their designs and endeavours run in such a chanel as may flow thither, and not to stream back, or aside, in any other course. It is a sad preferment to be enriched wth the calamity of Church or State, and to build up your own ship with the broken planks of the Kingdomes vessels; or to settle your own inheritance, before the publicks.

Neh. 5. 16 17. *But the former Governours were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of their bread and wine, beſides forty ſhekels of ſilver: but ſo did not I, becauſe of the fear of the Lord; I alſo continued in the work of the Lord, I alſo continued in the work of the Lord, neither bought we any land.*

No hearkening to pretences.

It is no ſafe hearkening or turning aſide to the pretences of thoſe whom you are not aſſured of to be cordiall in the work: Such only make out either to ſtand in your way, or to break the ſtrength of your applications to the publick.

Then Sanballat and Geſhem ſent to me, ſaying, Come let us meet together: but I ſent, ſaying, I am doing a great work, why ſhould the work ceaſe whilſt I leave it?

Imaginary dangers.

The fears and jealouſies, and imaginary dangers, are uſually the contrivances of the enemy, nor ought they to be reckoned further into the common work, then cautious for ſtrengthening; they that account them

them as other ſerve not ſo much the deſigne of God, as the Enemies:

For they all made us afraid, that we might do ſo, and ſin, and there they might have matter for an evil report. Neh.6.9. 25.

Aſtoniſhment from God.

The more that God is ſought to, the more of aſtoniſhment will the ſucceſſe have in it, and the more wonder and fear will it ſhed upon the hearts of the deſpiſers.

Now therefore, O my God, ſtrengthen my hands, and, O my God, think thou on Tobiah. So the wall was finiſhed, and they were much caſt down in their own eyes, for they perceived that this work was wrought of God. Neh.6.9. 10,16,17. 18.

Secret workings.

The greateſt hinderances, are the ſecret and inward workings by ſuch who hold correſpondency with ſome without: and if the work be Gods, there will be many of theſe: therefore relations, alliances & dependencies ought to be carefully lookt to; for the Enemy winds in at theſe, to betray and act by.

The Nobles of Judah ſent many Neh.6.1 18.

letters unto Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came to them, and there were many in Judah sworne unto him, because he was the son in law of Shecaniah.

Heavenly instruments.

It is the safest and most harmonious in the work of God, to imploy such agents as have much of God in them: Heavenly work is the best set on by heavenly instruments.

Then I gave my brother Hananiah the Ruler of the Palace, charge over Jerusalem, for he was a faithfull man, and feared God above many, Neh. 7. 2.

Publick designations.

In publick designations to place or imployment, it is good ordering and disposing men abroad, according to their neerest relations and interests.

And appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, & every one to be over against his own house, Neh. 7. 3.

Originations.

In the proceedings of the business of God, he hath his speciall times of working, of new beginnings, and origi-

originations : for God is never at ſuch a loſſe, but he knowes where to begin: and therefore we fall very ſhort of Gods deſigne, in doubtings and deſpondencies, ſeeing that he is ſo immediate and infinite an Agent as he is.

And my God put into my heart to gather together the Nobles and the Rulers, &c.

Gods Treaſurers.

Gods work is of that nature, that drawes out the ſtrength and contribution of all ſorts, and God only ſeems to lay up proviſions amongſt his people for ſuch a time: Men are but treaſurers for God, and muſt open their coffers, when providence puts the key into their hands.

And ſome of the chiefe of the Fathers gave unto the worke, and that which the reſt of the people gave, was twenty thouſand drams of gold, &c. Neh,7.72,73.

Alſo we made ordinances for us to charge our ſelvs yearly for the ſervice of the houſe of our God, Neh.10.32.

Scriptures openly conſulted.

It is the ſureſt way, to conſult the Scriptures of God, and finde out the minde of him in every part of our way to Reformation; and to draw out thoſe principles there, which the people are to work by: The more light the multitude ſee from thence, the more firmly and faithfully will they walk.

And Ezra opened the book in the ſight of the people day by day, from the firſt day unto the laſt day he read in the book of the law of God.

The mixed, or Neutraliſts.

There ought to be a godly and faithfull care in the times of Reformation, to diſcriminate and ſeparate thoſe that are mixed or Neutraliſts, for they are ſuch as ſtand in the way; and if the buſineſſe flow into their orbe of negotiation, there it ſticks and is retarded.

In thoſe dayes ſaw I alſo Jewes that had maried wives of Aſhdod, of Ammon, and Moab: and their children ſpake half in the ſpeech of Aſhdod, and could not ſpeak in the Jewes language: And I contended with them, and ſmote

ſmote them, Neh. 13.23,24.

Prayer beforehand.

When we expect God down amongſt us to do ſome great thing for his Church, then ſhould be the ſeaſon of our holy aſſemblings & meetings: and it is a ſigne of Gods immediate following, when he ſends out a ſpirit of Prayer and Supplication beforehand.

Then returned they unto Jeruſalem, and all continued with one accord in prayer and ſupplication. Act. 1.12,14.

Publick appointments.

In publick appointments there is much godly prudence in ſelecting thoſe that are not experimentally known amongſt us.

Wherefore of thoſe men which have accompanied with us all the time, muſt one be ordained to be a witnes, Act. 1.21

Reſort and conſociate.

When evident dangers and obſtructions are in the way, then it is good for the people of God to reſort and conſociate, and to make the maine part of their deſigne a communicating of the ſtate of their affairs

affairs to God, for they relate moſt to him, and it is the fitteſt to impart to him thoſe impediments what he can only remove.

And being let go they went unto their own company, and when they heard that, they lift up their voyce to God with one accord, &c. Acts 4.23.

Differences compoſed.

Differences amongſt the godly are beſt healed, and compoſed by the godly, and meetings or gatherings of the people of God are remedies very agreeable to the diſtemper.

&:6.1,2 *There aroſe a murmuring of the* Grecians, *againſt the* Hebrews *Then the twelve called the multitude of the Diſciples together.*

Spirituall providence.

When once the Goſpel hath been admitted, there muſt be a ſpirituall providence uſed, not only for propagating, but ſtrengthening and eſtabliſhing.

Acts 8.14 *Heard that Samaria had received the word, they ſent nato them* Peter *and* John.

An eminent Agent.

If

If there be any one agent whom God hath eminently engaged and prospered in his work, there ought to be an eminent care for his preservation and accommodation, least the light fall out if the candlestick be broken.

And they watched the gates day and night to kill him, then the Disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. Acts 19. 24,25.

Gracious seasons.

When the Lord gives any gracious seasons to his people from troubles or persecutions, those times must be only Spirituall, else the people of God come not up to his ends in the mercies received, and it may be just with God to break off such seasons, when they are no better acknowledged.

Then had the Churches rest and were edified, walking in the fear of the Lord. Acts 19. 31.

Care in communicating.

Where any thing is acted by any of the people of God, by a more then ordinary light, there ought to be

be much care in communicating and clearing up to the mindes of darker Brethren, the reasons and grounds of such actings, and no such disputings or contendings as may rather ravell out a controversie, then guide into any orderly information.

Acts 11. 2,3. *And when* Peter *was come up, they of the circumcision contended with him. And* Peter *rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them.*

The whole counsels of God.

It is godly prudence, to prepare people in their way to reformation, with telling them as well of the Crosse as the Crown, and to open the true constitution of things below, and this is to publish the whole counsels of God, and to lay in a principle of patience, and premonition before any thing come to passe.

Acts 14. 22. *They returned again, and confirmed the soules of the Disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of Heaven.*

FINIS.